From Samarkhand to Sardis

A new approach to the Seleucid empire

Susan Sherwin-White
& Amélie Kuhrt

From Samarkhand to Sardis

The empire created by Alexander the Great's general Seleucus constituted the largest Hellenistic kingdom of the successor states; yet this is the first substantial treatment of Seleucid history to appear for fifty years. The authors approach this important and successful state from new perspectives, seeing it as part of the Middle Eastern world rather than solely in Greco-Roman terms, and arguing that the Seleucid state is best understood as heir to the great Achaemenid Persian empire and earlier Middle Eastern states.

They investigate the economies, social structures, political systems and cultures of the many peoples making up the empire, and analyse, in the context of colonialism and imperialism, such evidence as exists for cultural changes, including Hellenisation.

The book makes accessible the great variety of new and important documents, Greek and non-Greek, that have been recently discovered. It will be of interest to students, teachers and general readers, as well as to specialists.

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FROM SAMARKHAND TO SARDIS

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Preface

Susan Sherwin-White wrote the original drafts (Chapters 1-7) on which this book is based, beginning in 1984; they were initially intended to form part of a general survey of the hellenistic world. In 1988 we decided that it would be useful to follow up the agenda set by our book *Hellenism in the East* (Duckworth, 1987) by writing an *état de question* of the Seleucid empire, for which a considerable need exists, incorporating this material. Susan Sherwin-White's prime expertise is the hellenistic period, while Amélie Kuhrt's is the ancient Near East in earlier periods, particularly Mesopotamia and the Achaemenid empire. We feel that the combination of these different but complementary perspectives is essential for any reassessment of the character of the Seleucid state. We have rewritten, updated and worked through the whole book together and take joint responsibility for it and for any errors.

All dates are BC unless otherwise indicated.

We would like to thank Pierre Briant and Charlotte Roueché for reading and commenting on the manuscript. Susan Sherwin-White would also like to thank the British Academy for a grant to study the Greek inscriptions from Susa in the Louvre Museum, Paris. Further we express our gratitude to the Geography Department, UCL, for drawing the maps.

S.S.-W.
A.K.

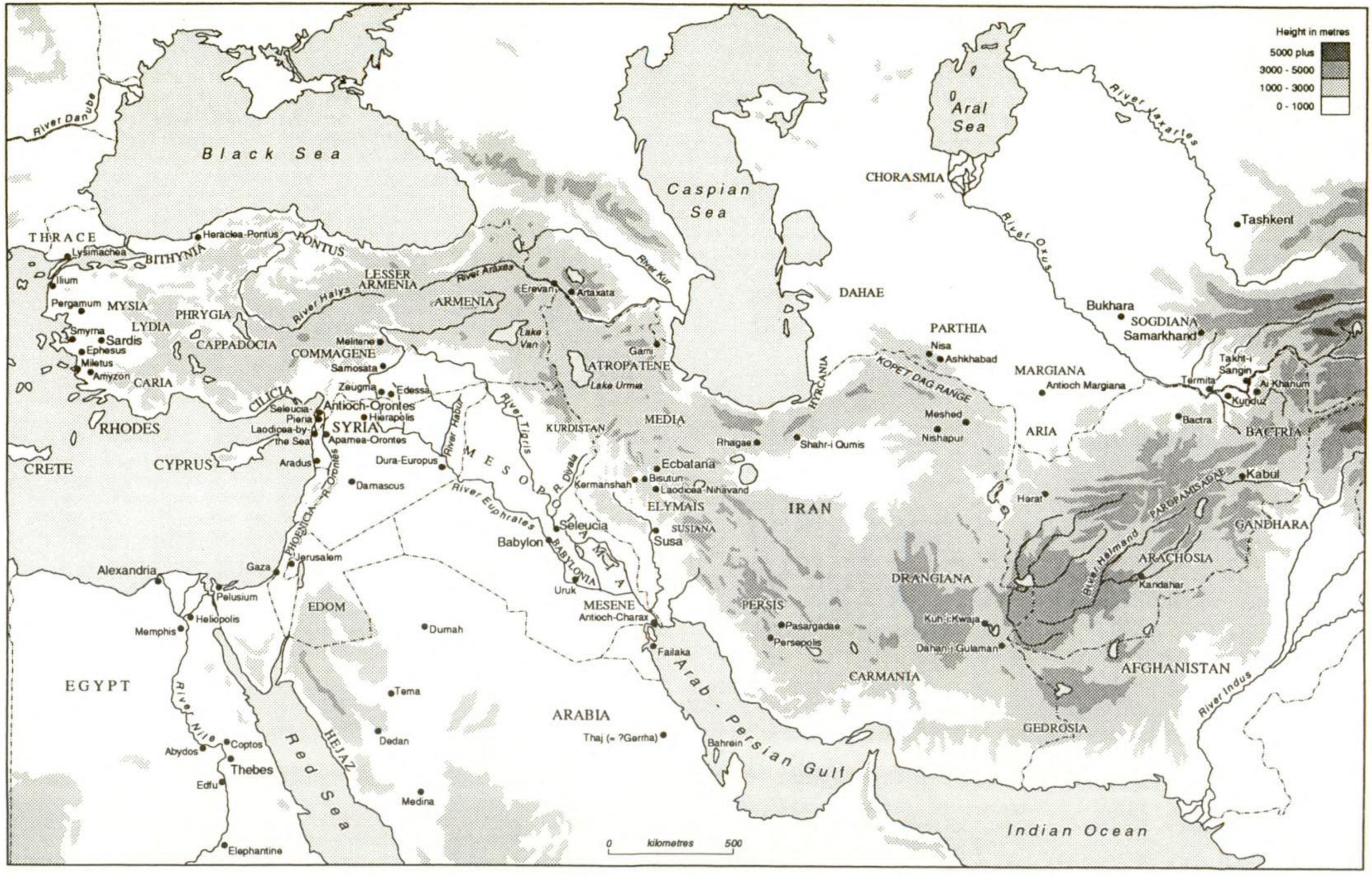


Fig. 1. The Seleucid empire in the third century.

Introduction

The title of this book expresses our firmly held view that the Seleucid empire was an eastern empire centered in the middle east, particularly the 'Fertile Crescent', i.e. Mesopotamia and north Syria, and western Iran. These areas formed, socially, politically and economically, the core of the Seleucid kings' huge realm (cf. Chapter 1 and our *Hellenism in the East*). From this perspective, Asia Minor in the west and Central Asia in the east constituted the outer frontiers of the kingdom, as had been the case for the Achaemenids. The Seleucids, however, unlike their Persian predecessors, never managed to annex Egypt and ceded, by treaty, part of the eastern region to the powerful Mauryan dynasty of India (see Chapters 1 and 4).

It has been usual to see the formation of the hellenistic Seleucid state as creating an entirely new departure in middle eastern history, a perception based on the old, but tenacious, idea that the Greeks were in some sense politically, culturally and economically more advanced than the various peoples of the middle east whom they had conquered. This view requires serious modification when one realises that the area conquered by Alexander included places with a reconstructible history stretching back over three thousand years, which had experienced immense political and social changes and developments within that time. One major and significant change affecting the whole region was the creation of the Achaemenid empire between 550 and 500, when a huge number of different states and peoples were united for the first time within one imperial system. At the same time it must be remembered that the Achaemenid kings themselves built on the Assyrian and Babylonian political heritage in terms of administration and government (taxes, roads, colonies, military techniques and organisation, elements of royal ideology, cf. Kuhrt 1987b; *AchHist* VIII). What Alexander conquered was what we now, as a result of recent scholarship, know to have been a highly developed, successful and complex empire, whose institutions he himself and his Seleucid successors adopted and adapted (Briant 1987b; 1990). It is now well established that the Persian empire was not, despite difficulties, in a state of political and economic decline in the fourth century. The old image of Alexander the Great and the Greeks resuscitating a moribund

and bankrupt 'oriental' despotic state by introducing new forms of economic and social life, such as cities, markets, slavery and coinage, which still lingers in some approaches to the hellenistic world, can now be seen to be untenable. All of these apparent Greek innovations had existed in the Achaemenid empire and, in some cases, had been part of middle eastern life for millennia. This means that analyses of changes in the hellenistic period have to be refocussed and new, different questions asked of the evidence in order to define where and how changes took place (see generally *RTP* 291-330).

In order to reach such an understanding, the work of the *Achaemenid History* group (directed by Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Amélie Kuhrt) has been vital in facilitating the co-operation of scholars from different disciplines to gain a clearer comprehension of the interplay of the many different cultures embraced by the great Persian empire. It is now no longer defensible to work on the history of the hellenistic east without taking account of the progress made by specialists studying the culture and society of the multitude of peoples of the region: Assyriologists, Iranologists, biblical scholars, archaeologists, Semitic philologists and Egyptologists. Historians of Ptolemaic Egypt have been much more aware than those writing on Seleucid history how essential co-operation with Egyptologists is if one is to begin to grasp the impact of Macedonian rule (see, for example, Thompson 1988). An attempt to bridge this gap was made with *Hellenism in the East*, but such interdisciplinary work has been the exception rather than the rule in Seleucid studies.

Why has such co-operation, generally speaking, happened hardly at all in the case of the Seleucid empire? Part of the explanation lies in the sheer size and, hence, complexity of the Seleucid realm, which incorporated a vast range of socio-political, cultural and linguistic entities. As a result, scholars in segregated research groups specialise in particular regions and disciplines, which makes it extremely hard to construct an overall picture. Another factor is that, until recently, much of the work done on Seleucid history has been conducted by Greco-Roman historians whose interests, understandably, have tended to be limited to the western fringes (i.e. Asia Minor and Syria) of the Seleucid empire – the areas which later became Roman provinces. This was not true of the great hellenistic historians writing earlier this century, such as Rostovtzeff, Tarn and Bickerman, but since their time a great deal of new material has been discovered and needs to be evaluated. An overconcentration on the western edges of the Seleucid state has led to a comparative neglect and undervaluing of its eastern half. For this very reason we have included in this book chapters on the eastern provinces and beyond of the empire, to emphasise their importance and redress the balance. This also explains why we have included an assessment of Mauryan India as an

important neighbour of the Seleucid rulers with which they maintained active relations over a hundred years, rather than dwelling on the well-explored Seleucid contacts with the western hellenistic kingdoms, i.e. Pergamum, Macedon and Egypt.

A particular problem encountered by anyone working on Seleucid history is the dearth of continuous literary sources to provide a narrative framework. Diodorus, in books XVIII and XIX, gives an unrivalled, detailed account of the struggles between the successors carving out their kingdoms. But the limitation, even here, is that he concentrates on the wars of Eumenes and Antigonus, so that there is no continuous history of the eastern areas. After 301, Diodorus is preserved only in fragments. The great historian, Polybius, was primarily interested in trying to explain the conflict between Greece and Rome, and Rome's emergence as an imperial power. His interest in Seleucid and eastern history is, therefore, subordinate to this, and, in addition, his work (after book V) survives only in fragments, though these are often of considerable value. Of other later historians, Justin's summary of Pompeius Trogus and Appian's *Syrian Wars* are important sources, but they are highly selective and often hard to evaluate. Among the many local historians, such as Berossus, Megasthenes, Memnon, Josephus and the author(s) of I and II *Maccabees*, only the Jewish writers have survived in full. Although the latter provide very useful information about the Seleucid state, their vision tends to be bounded by the comparatively narrow interests of the tiny region of Judaea, which was not a part of the Seleucid empire until the end of the third century.

This rather negative picture of our available sources is offset by a wealth of new documents: for example, the recent publication of the invaluable Babylonian astronomical diaries (Sachs/Hunger 1988; 1989), and the important new Greek inscriptions from Sardis, Heraclea-Latmus, Amyzon and Mysia from the reign of Antiochus III (see especially Chapter 7). Apart from this new material, there is a mass of previously known cuneiform hellenistic texts, including chronicles, king lists, astronomical, literary, mathematical and scientific texts, ritual instructions, hymns, prophecies, legal documents and formal public texts (for a survey, see Oelsner 1986), as well as the corpus of hellenistic Greek inscriptions (*RC*). Many of these are relevant to the Seleucid empire, and have been extensively used throughout this book. This material is often poorly preserved and without adequate archaeological context which makes it at times very difficult to use constructively, but it can nevertheless yield rich results.

Although there have been some major new excavations, most notably Ai Khanoum, Sardis, smaller sites such as Failaka in the gulf and others in Central Asia (see Chapters 4 and 6), it is still the case that the major thrust of archaeology is not the hellenistic period (for

this problem, see Alcock forthcoming). As a result we have to utilise such scattered finds as turn up in the course of an excavation or else are found accidentally or dug up illicitly. Nevertheless the archaeological material both from sites and scattered remains is of great importance, including pottery, *bullae*, fragments of sculpture, coins, seals, terracottas and *ostraka*. More generally, archaeological settlement and survey analysis could potentially help with understanding, for example, the intensity of land-use and population fluctuations, i.e. it could help to provide a picture of the Seleucid empire 'from below' (Alcock forthcoming). At present, the only detailed available surveys of this type are those of Adams (1965; 1981; Adams/Nissen 1972), which are limited to Babylonia (but cf. Salles 1987 for some of the Arab-Persian gulf evidence).

A weakness in approaches to the Seleucid empire, partly perhaps a result of the lack of continuous literary sources, has been a tendency to ignore the long time-spans separating known events. As a result, there has been a temptation to concertina almost two hundred years of Seleucid history and forget the unknown and complicated events in between. There is no way at present of filling these long gaps (but see now the astronomical diaries, Chapter 5), but they must be remembered, especially with regard to the slow development of the Parthian state over sixty years (230s to 170s, see Chapters 3 and 8).

We have deliberately not included a chapter on the 'Greek city'. First of all, city-life was not a new concept in the middle east, but the classic form in which political life was articulated in many regions (e.g. Central Asia, Iran, Mesopotamia, the Levant). Secondly, we feel that ancient Greek city-life in many ways continued after Alexander in the circumstances of the hellenistic kingdoms much as it had done before, namely small city-states struggling to survive subject to greater powers and striving militarily and economically to maintain their civic ideology and identity. Thirdly, it has seemed more appropriate to analyse such impact as there was of the Seleucid empire on older cities (both Greek and non-Greek) and the Seleucid creation of new ones (see particularly Chapter 6) by assessing the evidence available for individual centres, rather than attempting to define the abstract category of the 'Greek city'. Important developments such as civic and royal euergetism we have discussed throughout the book as seemed relevant.

An important aim of the book is to differentiate what is imperial, in other words, generally characteristic of empires, from what is specifically Macedonian/Greek in the Seleucid state. A failure to do this has led in the past to some distortions in reconstructing and perceiving the nature of Seleucid rule. In trying to understand the Seleucid empire it has seemed most important to us to ask why it held together so long, an important question which we feel has received too

little attention. We have therefore concentrated our analysis on the third and early second centuries, seeing it as a hundred-year period during which the Seleucid kings were extraordinarily successful in imposing and retaining control of immense territories. Given the character of the sources, some of what we think to be important may give rise to disagreement and should, we hope, engender discussion. It is in the nature of research that there are never final 'right' answers; as the hellenistic historian William Tarn, writing for his daughter (at the time that his path-breaking study *The Greeks in Bactria and India* was completed), said:

> You are a scholar, and I can do nothing for scholars. You need no ideal, for you have one. You need no dreams, for your life is one. For you, the earth pours out hidden treasure, and the impossible comes true day by day. What you desire just now is a long definite inscription to settle a controverted point in your favour. And if I could give it you, just think how miserable you'd be. Nothing further to argue about there; and several quite happy and contentious professors would be reduced to such straits that I don't know what crimes you might all commit. You might even take to making money. (W.W. Tarn, *The Treasure of the Isle of Mist: a tale of the Isle of Skye*, London 1938)

CHAPTER ONE

Building the Seleucid Empire

> In my view it is beyond dispute that Seleucus was the greatest king of those who succeeded Alexander, of the most royal mind (*gnome*), and ruling over the greatest extent of territory, next to Alexander himself. (Arrian *Anab*. VII 22,5; cf. Appian *Syr*. 56; Justin XXXVIII 7,1)

The great stature of Seleucus among the hellenistic kings after Alexander, which in this quotation is causally linked with his image as winner of a very large land empire, was recognised more clearly in antiquity than today. Thus Alexander and Seleucus, as founders of the Seleucid empire, paralleled Cyrus and Darius as the architects of the Persian empire (Justin XXXVIII 7,1). The comparison of Seleucus to Darius I is a defensible estimate of Seleucus' contribution towards the organisation of Alexander's military conquests as an enduring territorial empire. No less than seven modern nations now occupy the territories that Seleucus' vast kingdom included at the end of his reign (Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Afghanistan) and large parts of the former Soviet Republics of Armenia, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. By the time of his death, Seleucus had imposed control on an empire whose boundaries stretched from southern Thrace through Anatolia, the modern near and middle east and central Asia to the frontiers with ancient India in the east, north to the arid steppe-land beyond the Syr Darya (Jaxartes) river, and south to the waters of the Arab-Persian gulf. Antiochus III (223-186) added the strategically and economically vital sector between Seleucid Syria and Ptolemaic Egypt at the end of the third century (South Syria, the Phoenician cities, Judaea and Transjordania) bringing the southern borders of the Seleucid empire for the first time to the Sinai desert.

It is mistaken to regard this vast empire as fleeting and transitory. What can be termed the 'strong view' of the early Seleucid kingdom is accepted in this book (cf. Musti 1977, 210ff.; Wolski 1974; 1976; 1977; 1982; 1984; Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1987); a prevalent approach, which is rejected here as ill-based, is the 'weak view' which characterises (and derogates) the Seleucid empire as a mere patchwork of separate

'nations' or countries without cohesive structure and therefore easily fragmented – in fact in slow decline right from the death of its founder, Seleucus I (281). This latter approach is encapsulated in William Tarn's description of the kingdom as an 'outer shell' whose living force was (predictably) to be imported Greeks and Greek culture (Tarn 1938; Will 1979-82; Walbank 1981). In fact for some fifty years the first two Seleucid kings ruled the absolutely vast region described above, while in Babylonia Seleucid rule lasted uninterrupted for nearly two hundred years. A more positive approach is vital, investigating what held the empire together for so long, rather than why it did not fall apart sooner (cf. Sherwin-White 1987).

From satrap to king

It is easy to take for granted the Successors' ultimately successful grip on Alexander's empire after his death. Macedonian rule seems to have survived in spite, rather than because, of the Macedonian high command, whose members fought each other in wars lasting the rest of the century. Macedonian rule in the east continued largely perhaps because there was *at this time* no foreign power left strong enough to intervene. Internally there seems at first sight little evidence of unrest among the subjugated peoples. This apparent quiet is usually accepted as reality (Will 1979; 1984; Walbank 1981) and variously explained by guesses (apathy, 'a waiting game' (Iran) and the thoroughness of Alexander's methods). The picture of comparative tranquillity is in part a myth created by the tunnel vision of the main sources, which are Greek (Diodorus/Hieronymus), and whose overriding interest is the warfare between the Successors and only incidentally non-Greek affairs. Babylon, centre of the Macedonian army and base of Alexander's new fleet, had no chance of action even if anyone wanted to revolt. It kept quiet. But signs of hostility to Alexander and to Macedonian rule are attested, expressed in the text known as the Dynastic Prophecy (Grayson 1975, 24-37; Lambert 1978; Sherwin-White 1987, 10-14). This belongs to a category of Akkadian texts which consist of phoney predictions referring to a sequence of kings described by the number of years of their reigns and classified as good or bad: Alexander's reign is bad; Darius' reversal of Alexander's victory is 'predicted' and the people will afterwards prosper. There is a significant reference to tax-exemption. The date is a crux, because the last part of the column is not fully preserved – at least one other reign is mentioned. The text must therefore be post-Alexander, probably from the early Seleucid period. The reversal of Darius' defeat should not be used to date the text before the death of Darius (as, for example, by Marasco 1985) because the function of the text is not objective history (for another example of a defeat presented as a victory, cf. II

Maccabees 11.1-15). The last Shah of Iran would have understood: among his lesser sins was his refusal to recognise the Macedonian/Greek conquest of Iran – a political stance memorialised in David Stronach's coinage of the term 'post-Achaemenid' as a codeword to record, inoffensively, his Seleucid period finds in Iran under the Shah's regime. But the point of the text is not just to be rude about Alexander, and its continuation shows this. Ringren (1983), in a brief study of this class of text, got further; he seems to be right in saying that it appears to be the work of someone who wants to support a new ruler, who is expected to restore order after a period regarded as an example of bad rule – possibly an appeal to a Seleucid king.

Since Babylonia is traditionally recognised as the most favoured by Alexander of the conquered territories, this very early anti-Alexander text warns against assuming too readily a monolithic approach to any reign and against falling victim to Alexander and Greek propaganda. Perhaps to many, especially non-Iranian, ex-Achaemenid subjects long accustomed to monarchy in the ancient east, it mattered little what dynasty or king ruled, provided there was a king and respect for local traditions and rights. The anti-Alexander revolts which are best known, of course, were Greek – those of Athens (the 'Hellenic' or Lamian War) and the rebellion by Greek colonists in Bactria, who under the influence of homesickness and culture shock attempted a walk-out (cf. esp. Will 1984; see below p. 166). But the reaction was in reality not limited to Greeks. In Bactria, the local population had also joined the Greeks in their rebellion against Alexander; its motives were not an exodus but hostility to, and the desire for independence from, Macedonian conquest (cf. below p. 166, for the prohibition against colonists for leaving the place in which they had been settled). Rebellion in India was expressed by the fact that the Indians killed the Macedonian satraps appointed by Alexander and their replacements. A new anti-Macedonian ruler, Chandragupta, replaced the vassal king of the Punjab and re-asserted independence from Macedonian rule (*auctor libertatis*, i.e. 'creator of freedom'). Atropates, ex-satrap of Media, was another secessionist who created an independent enclave in north-west Media, in the mountainous area roughly corresponding to the region of modern Azerbaijan (a modern rendering of his name). The primarily hellenocentric focus of the surviving literary sources has hidden the true scale of opposition and disruption. Hints of this survive in the period of transition from Alexander to Seleucus – a time favouring the sheer opportunism of local dynasts. Major satrapies (Babylonia, Media, Persis, Susiana, Afghanistan excluding Bactria) did not erupt since Macedonian armies ranged over their lands.

A key to Seleucus' rise to power and to the future endurance of his kingdom was Babylonia, on which his territorial power was based (cf. below and p. 120; Sherwin-White 1987). Seleucus' 'right' to Babylonia

came originally from the carve-up of Alexander's empire in 320 (Triparadeisos: Errington 1970; Schober 1981). The satrapy of Babylonia was Seleucus' reward (and perhaps price) for his helpful role as one of the murderers of the regent Perdiccas the previous year. Seleucus' entry into office as satrap (319) is recorded in the fragment of the Babylonian chronicle known as the *Chronicle of the Diadochoi* (*ABC* 10: a prime text for the period). These chronicles, which continue into the Seleucid period, preserve a Babylonian-centered view of the world; significantly, *ABC* 10 does not question the validity of Seleucid rule. This evidence for Babylonian attitudes does not need to be left in limbo. In the period 319-315 Seleucus created what was in effect a system of political patronage to secure the support of important sectors of the Babylonian populace. Seleucus was forced out of Babylonia by Antigonus in 315. In 312, he returned with a small task force and managed to reclaim his satrapy, which Antigonus had had no authority to remove from him. One important element of Seleucus' success against Antigonus' garrisons, which Diodorus stresses, was the active support of the local Babylonian population (D.S. XIX 91). This support (*eunoia*) was a response to *euergesia* (patronage) from Seleucus in the earlier period: he had established a network of personal relationships based on favours, i.e. 'gifts' such as landgrants and tax immunities. The classic text illustrating this reciprocal relationship is Plutarch, *Eumenes* 4, describing the grant by a satrap of plots of land and jobs to supporters (*RTP* 13-93). It is notable that the population of Babylon, not just the Greeks, was evacuated by Seleucus in the face of invasion. This reliance on the support of the non-Greek population for their power base is attested for other Macedonian satraps in this period and was clearly a crucial element in their attempts to maintain control (cf. the Alcetas episode discussed below in Chapter 5, p. 123).

Seleucus' ability to rely on Babylonian support was helped by Antigonus' behaviour. In the fighting for Babylonia, attested only in a Babylonian chronicle (*ABC* 10; there is also a probable reference in Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –309, l.14; cf. Bernard 1989, 302-3; 1990a, 531), Antigonus treated Babylonia as enemy territory, sacking towns, temples and countryside. The chronicle gives – rare in this period – vivid glimpses of the horror and suffering of the war (311/10-308). This was ended by a final battle, datable to 308, which left Seleucus in control of Babylonia. The persistence of this struggle is notable and presumably reflects recognition of the importance of Babylonia as a key to control of Alexander's empire. Strategically, for the movement of goods and manpower and as a rich reservoir of agricultural resources and surpluses (Adams 1981), Babylonia was vital to any ancient power ruling or aiming at an empire spanning the middle east from the Iranian plateau to Syria.

On first regaining Babylonia (312) Seleucus moved fast to forestall opposition from the satraps of Media and Susiana appointed in Antigonus' purge of 316. Crossing the Tigris before Nicanor of Media could stop him, Seleucus pulled off a brilliant, devastating night attack on Nicanor's camp. The surviving forces, including Nicanor's Median and other Iranian soldiers, had little option but to go over to Seleucus. Seleucus went on to win control of the major Iranian satrapies of Media, Susiana and 'the adjacent regions'; these latter included the area around the gulf (D.S. XIX 100,6) and perhaps now Persis, homeland of the Achaemenids. This series of rapid military victories and territorial gains transformed Seleucus' position, as he himself realised most clearly of all: 'he had now acquired royal status and glory worthy of *hegemonia* (heading a major state)' (D.S. XIX 92,5), he summed up in a letter to the other Successors. But they had isolated Seleucus by the peace-treaty between Antigonus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Cassander of 311, which recognised Antigonus' power in 'Asia' and left Antigonus to fight it out with Seleucus as *ABC* 10 attests (310-308).

Antigonus never lost hope of reconstituting Alexander's empire. He founded in the Orontes valley, in north Syria, the city of Antigonea near the site of the later Antioch, whose strategic value for the control of Babylonia, the empire further east and the territories lying between Antigonus and Egypt, he clearly saw (D.S. XX 47,5). But in Seleucus he found a man whose physical strength, resilience, military successes and generalship matched his own. By 302, Seleucus had, with astonishing speed, established rule over the east – to the Iranian satrapies of what is now called 'inner Iran', i.e. roughly modern Iran (Media, Persis, Susiana), he added the satrapies of 'outer Iran', the Iranian lands beyond the Elburz range of northern Iran – Hyrcania and Parthia, Aria, Margiana, Bactria-Sogdiana, Drangiana and Arachosia in southern Afghanistan.

Appian describes *en bloc* and not in factual chronological order Seleucus' territorial gains, as they stood after his final defeat of Antigonus at Ipsus (301):

> Always lying in wait for the neighbouring nations, strong in arms and persuasive in diplomacy, he acquired Mesopotamia, Armenia, the so-called Seleucid Cappadocia, the Persians, Parthians, Bactrians, Arabs, Tapyri, Sogdiani, Arachotes, Hyrcanians, and all the other adjacent peoples that had been subdued by Alexander, as far as the river Indus, so that he ruled over a wider empire in Asia than any of his predecessors except Alexander. (Appian *Syr*. 55)

In several cases (e.g. Margiana, Mesopotamia) it is unclear whether places were won before or after Ipsus (301) and, if after (e.g. Seleucid Cappadocia, Armenia), exactly when in the years before Seleucus'

death. But Seleucus' rapid creation of a large empire east from his satrapy of Babylonia in Iran and Central Asia is impressive. Virtually nothing is known about this phase, in which whole regions were won, but that the expansion was achieved through military conquest, as well as skilful diplomacy. Justin refers to the many wars Seleucus fought in the east and telegraphically goes on, 'first he captured Babylonia, then, his forces' strength increased by victory, he took the Bactrians by storm' (Justin XV 4,10-12). After this comes Seleucus' war against Chandragupta (*c.* 306/5).

It is also evident that Seleucus' speed (308-306) has another explanation. The key to winning control of a satrapy was winning the satrap: Antigonus' method of acquiring the Upper Satrapies (316) had, to a large degree, been a matter of arranging deals with the individual satraps holding the regions; those locally powerful but inaccessible (D.S. XIX 48: Stasanor in Bactria-Sogdiana; Oxyartes in Parapomisadae) had been kept on by Antigonus, those powerful, accessible and unfriendly (Peucestas in Persis and Seleucus in Babylonia) were removed, and those Antigonus was prepared to trust (Sibyrtius in Arachosia) were allowed to remain in power. Seleucus undoubtedly acted in a similar way: for example, Sibyrtius continued in Arachosia; in some areas, 'diplomacy' of this sort and, therefore, a peaceful transition to the new ruler helps to explain Seleucus' rapid progress.

After the reduction of Bactria, Seleucus advanced into India and opened war against Chandragupta, king of the Mauryan tribe, crossing the river Indus but not reaching the Ganges. Whether Seleucus intended initially the re-conquest of 'India', or seriously weighed it up during his reign, finally to reject the project, is uncertain; by *c.* 305 he was satisfied with arranging a treaty with Chandragupta. Sharp disagreement exists about the interpretation of the precise content of individual clauses of the treaty and its objectives, but he ceded all of the Upper Indus, Gandhara, with its capital Taxila, part or all of Parapomisadae and east Arachosia (Strabo XV 2,9; Fraser 1979; Bernard 1985, 85-95). From Seleucus' viewpoint the major prize was a huge force of war elephants which proved tactically decisive at Ipsus, as Seleucid coins of eastern mints in Seleucia-Tigris, Susa and Bactria advertised (Polyaenus IV 9,3; Scullard 1974, 96ff. and 269 n. 46; *ESM*) and the breeding of elephants at Apamea demonstrates (Strabo XVI 2,10). The actual figure of five hundred (Strabo XV 2,9, XVI 2,10; Plutarch *Alex.* 62) is suspect as a fabulous round figure used in contemporary India to denote huge quantities of anything, from the number of a king's concubines to the legendary five hundred rivers of the Himalayas (Tarn 1940; cf. Cary 1951, 41 n. 1; Scullard 1974, 96ff. and 269 n. 46; Hornblower 1981, 110, 111). No Indian or Macedonian king ever deployed elephant forces on this scale, the largest being those of Porus (two hundred) and of Antiochus III (a hundred and twenty).

Strabo's source (Megasthenes) took literally a turn of phrase; the probable size was less than five but still several hundreds. Seleucus wisely chose friendship with Chandragupta rather than further war and conquests. We do not know the reasons, but may speculate that it was because of his knowledge of Chandragupta's power and resources (cf. below Chapter 4) and because his enemies, Antigonus and Demetrius, were still intact and, after the acquisition of Cyprus by Antigonus in 306 and the consolidation of Syria, increasingly dangerous to Seleucus.

Any plans for a strategy of conquest seem to have been dropped for immediate profit and a pact of friendship. Seleucus' continued interest in, and involvement with, Chandragupta is reflected in the tradition of his repeated despatch of Megasthenes to the Mauryan capital as ambassador to Chandragupta. Furthermore, it is easy to guess that Megasthenes' instructions had included the requirements typical of Alexander's preliminary pre-conquest preparations – to discover the nature of the territory, size of population, customs and strength (Arrian *Anab*. IV 1,2; cf. below p. 95). This was met by Megasthenes' work, revealing (and exaggerating) the cohesion and power of the Mauryan kingdom and therefore the difficulty of conquest. Besides the ideological, philosophical and utopian ends this work fulfilled, it gave Seleucus I solid grounds for justifying a non-conquest policy. In fact Seleucus' policy of friendship was continued by Antiochus I with Chandragupta's successor (and son) Amitrochates (Bindusara): it seems they kept up amicable relations and found a common interest in Greek culture, to judge from an anecdote probably going back to the contemporary Greek soldier Deimachus of Plataea (Schwarz 1969; Karttunen 1989, 100), attesting both political and cultural interchange.

Monarchies prefer to control major routes and therefore the trade and its sources. The Seleucids probably aimed to, and at times did, establish control over the gulf and of the sea-route to the Indus – from the start they never managed to control the eastern end of the land-route. Trade between India and the hellenistic kingdoms, however, continued, contrary to what one might have supposed. Seleucid trade with India is indisputably attested by the documentary and literary evidence of imports of woods, spices and gems unique to India (cf. below pp. 65-6, 97).

Self-preservation and self-aggrandisement (D.S. XXI 1, 4a.2) were the main motives for the grand alliance of Seleucus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Cassander in 301. The last two were most affected by Antigonus' and Demetrius' growing success in Greece (the conquest of the Peloponnese, the adherence of Athens, Boeotia, Euboea and the Aegean islands and their organisation into a military league). Only the combined forces of the allied kings could produce an army to match

Antigonus' huge numbers at Ipsus: 65,000 infantry against Antigonus' 70,000. But the allies had a superiority both in cavalry numbers, 15,000 against 10,000, reflecting the Iranian cavalry of Seleucus, and in elephants, whose tactical use prevented Demetrius and his cavalry rejoining battle after an overlong pursuit of Antiochus left Antigonus exposed and powerless to prevent Seleucus' cool reduction of his phalanx by the use of bowmen and javelins. Both Seleucus and Antigonus commanded the infantry battalions and, therefore, fought on foot. Antigonus, who had expected victory (Plutarch *Dem*. 28), fell on the battlefield. Demetrius escaped with a tiny proportion of the army (5,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry: Plutarch *Dem*. 30).

The scope of the empire by *c*. 300

The victors divided up Antigonus' kingdom. The exact details of the division remain unclear. Lysimachus added to his fledgling Asia Minor possessions Antigonus' satrapies, save Cilicia which went to Cassander's brother Pleistarchus for the moment, and a number of Greek cities in Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, Ionia and Aeolis. To Seleucus, on paper, went the prize plum of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia (the country behind the Lebanese coastal plain and Phoenician cities: D.S. XXI 1,4b.5); he marched there immediately after the Battle of Ipsus (*ibid*.), so important was the area economically and militarily. Ptolemy, who had not joined in person in the Ipsus campaign, executed his own sideshow. Seleucus found him in occupation of, and claiming the right to control, the area which he had briefly occupied in 320-315. Seleucus chose to drop the dispute 'because of their friendship'; one of the most significant results of this was his concentration upon consolidation of his empire. By 300, north Syria was added, Mesopotamia north of Babylonia and 'Armenia', plus southern Cappadocia known as Seleucid Cappadocia (as opposed to northern Cappadocia = Paphlagonia and Pontus).

In the hinterland, Cappadocia, between the mountains along the Upper Halys in the north and the Taurus range in the south, was a Seleucid satrapy (probably including Melitene and Cataonia), as was eventually Smooth Cilicia, and Rough Cilicia to the Calycadnus river. With these possessions Seleucus controlled the major routes across Anatolia and the entry to Syria and Mesopotamia via Smooth Cilicia and south Cappadocia and the crossing of the Euphrates at Melitene. Syria, south as far as the river Eleutheros and eastwards to the Euphrates, was Seleucid. Across the north, west of the Euphrates between Syria and Cappadocia, lay the area known as Commagene (Assyrian Kummuh, cf. Hawkins 1982, 375) 'a small district with a natural fortress at Samosata and exceedingly fertile' (Strabo XVI 2,3; *pace* Grainger 1989, 22, 43 n. 67), controlling important routes crossing

east into Upper Mesopotamia, south into Syria, north over the Taurus to Anatolia and west into Cilicia. The exact status of this valuable region in the time of the early Seleucids is uncertain before the earliest attestation of it as part of the Seleucid kingdom dated in Antiochus III's reign (Memnon *FGrH* 434 F18,5; 18,9; cf. below p. 190). Was it incorporated as part of the Syrian satrapy (cf. Bengtson 1944, 257-60) or was it part of the region of neighbouring Sophene, a vassal kingdom by the second half of the century (Bedoukian 1968)? Or was it a separate kingdom as had been attested earlier in the ninth to eighth centuries before the Assyrian annexation? All one can say is that it seems likely that, as the northern flank of Syria, it was under Seleucid control, directly or indirectly, before the reign of Antiochus III.

Seleucus' control of the lower river crossings of the Euphrates at Zeugma was reinforced by the twin foundations of Seleucia and Apamea (cf. Jones 1971; for the view that Apamea was merely a suburb of Seleucia, cf. Grainger 1989, 75-7) facing each other on the Syrian and Mesopotamian banks of the Euphrates, symbolising the geographical and ideological importance of his marriage with the Iranian princess, Apame, by using his own name and that of his wife, for the cities linked by a bridge. It was here (in 221) that Antiochus III met his own bride, Laodice, daughter of Mithridates of Pontus, on her journey from Pontus and celebrated symbolically the royal wedding (Polyb. V 43,1-4).

The whole Fertile Crescent from Upper Mesopotamia to the gulf was incorporated and directly administered as satrapies (see below pp. 44-5). On the northern marches, Seleucus I claimed possession of 'Armenia' (Appian *Syr*. 57). The huge Achaemenid satrapy of Armenia seems to have been split into two unequal areas (cf. below pp. 16-17). Now, or later on in the third century, Sophene formed a separate enclave (by 212) under an Iranian dynastic vassal, Xerxes, liable to tribute and to military contributions (Polyb. VIII F23; see below Chapter 7). In the northern bloc, the old Iranian Orontid dynasty, which had supplied the Achaemenid satraps, held the satrapy again by 316 (D.S. XIX 23,3) and, from scattered references to dynasts named Orontas (D.S. XXXI 19,5: Ardoates) ruling in the mid-third century and in Antiochus III's reign, it looks as though the Iranian dynasty survived the change-over from Achaemenid to Seleucid rule (see below pp. 192-4). There is no doubt from Antiochus III's later handling of the two Armenian regions (Polyaenus IV 17) that the kingship there was in the (Seleucid) king's gift (below pp. 190, 194). This naturally did not prevent local rulers acting independently and helping Seleucid enemies. The major importance of this area for the Achaemenids had been levies of large numbers of horses and military forces (cf., e.g., Arrian *Anab*. III 8,5 for Armenian cavalry and infantry at Gaugamela; Strabo XI 14,9 for the gift of two thousand foals presented to the Persian king by the satrap of Armenia

on the occasion of the *Mithrakana* festival). The quality of Armenian horses is noted by Xenophon and Strabo, as well as the earlier Assyrian king, Sargon II (721-705), who also admired the particular expertise in horse-rearing and training that he encountered there:

> The people (and) inhabitants of this area have not their equal in the whole of Urartu (= Armenia) as far as their ability (with respect to) riding-horses is concerned. Choice, very young foals born in (the Armenian king's) wide lands and which are raised for the main troops of his kingdom, they catch every year. Only when they have been taken to the region of Subi (= west Azerbaijan) and their capacities checked out, are they ridden; (until that has been done) they are not trained in attack, turning and wheeling around – (activities) which belong to the battle –; the yoke remains unfastened. (TCL 3, ll. 170-3; cf. also, much later, Marco Polo's observations on the excellent pastures here: Marco Polo 1958, 48)

Antiochus III's levies from here suggest that this constituted the main value of the region for the Seleucids too. This northern area was not strategically important before the rise of Parthian power and Parthian expansion into Iran, and there is little evidence of Seleucid colonies (but cf. below Chapter 7).

As far as Armenia is concerned, we are dealing mainly with the region known, after Pompey's settlement of Asia, as Greater Armenia, situated east of the Upper Euphrates and including extensive areas round Lake Van, along the valley of the river Araxes which empties into the Caspian Sea and north to Lake Sevan, and the southern marches of the small kingdom of Iberia, south of the river Kur. There are many problems over the boundaries of Seleucid Armenia, which have not been studied, but could be illuminated by the accounts of the expansion of the Armenian kingdom beyond the limits of '*Armenia*' after Antiochus III's defeat by the Romans in 189. Roughly, the frontiers on the south and south-west are the Seleucid satrapies of Seleucid Cappadocia, Mesopotamia and Syria, and of Commagene (cf. above pp. 14-15); in the north, Iberia in the Lower Caucasus, north of the river Araxes and Lake Sevan, and western Media Atropatene – roughly equivalent to modern Azerbaijan; in the north-west, separating Armenia from the Black Sea, were independent tribes. The area which was later known as Lesser Armenia, a name given to territories west of the upper course of the Euphrates in contrast to Greater Armenia, included the present-day districts of Siwas and Erzincan, and areas bordering on ancient Cappadocia in the south-west and Pontus in the north. This was ruled by *dynastoi* (local rulers) before being conquered by Mithridates Eupator (Strabo XII 3,28), and appears to have formed an independent enclave between

Cappadocia and Armenia of not much importance, as far as we know at present.

The distinctive feature of Armenia is its great altitude, its mere elevation insulating the country from its neighbours, particularly from the Mesopotamian lowlands – unlike, for example, the Zagros mountains lining, north to south, the western edges of Persia, which shelve gradually down from Iran westwards to the Mesopotamian lowlands, the Armenian mountains ascend at once to their full height from the level of the Tigris and present an enormous block to communications. Another natural impediment to penetration from the south is the series of mountain ranges which run east-west laterally across the country (cf. Zimansky 1985, 9-31). The main point of entry to Armenia for the Seleucids was in the south-west corner (in the area known in antiquity as Sophene) from the crossing of the Euphrates at Tomisa, in south-east Cappadocia, from which one could travel up the Euphrates valley. From the headwaters of the Upper Euphrates a pass led to the Araxes valley in north Armenia.

The lands between the Tigris and the Zagros mountains formed administrative regions under direct rule (cf. below Chapter 2) all the way from Assyria to the gulf. The lower Diyala valley was made into a separate satrapy (Sittacene = Apolloniatis, cf. Schmitt 1964, 32ff., 52ff.) and the neighbourhood of modern Kermanshah, always strategically important for control of the route, was a military zone (see below p. 77). These two developments signal Seleucid concern for maintaining contact eastwards with the Iranian satrapies.

The pattern of direct, i.e. satrapal, rule was interrupted by areas of mountains and by desert. At the Zagros range, the mountain peoples (Cossaeans, Kerchoi and Elymaioi), who were sedentary, village-based folk (Briant 1982a, ch. 2) with a subsistence economy, were not incorporated as tribute-paying subjects. The Achaemenids had based their relations with semi-nomadic tribes and mountain peoples like these on gift-exchange, whereby Achaemenid suzerainty was recognised solely in the obligation of military service (cf. below). Polybius' description of the powerful mountain tribes of the Zagros and Caspian ranges (V 44) makes it clear that the Seleucids also did not bring these people under direct rule. The occasional attestation of use of troops from there by king and satrap suggests that the Seleucids probably followed the wise course of the Achaemenids, and that this is a sign of the success of Seleucid control (contrast Antigonus' disastrous attempt to fight his way through the Zagros mountains, disdaining to negotiate with local groups (D.S. XIX 19,2-8)). In general, the Seleucids, like the Achaemenids in Anatolia (Mysians, Pisidians, Lycaonians) and in Iran (Zagros and Caspian ranges), sensibly did not pursue a policy of military subjugation and annexation in such areas. The semi-nomadic Arabs of the Syrian desert and of north Arabia were

another large group the Achaemenids did not bring under direct rule by satrapising – no one had, except for a short-lived attempt by Nabonidus (556-539: cf. Ephal 1982, 179-91; Beaulieu 1989a, 169-85; Kuhrt 1990a, 131-2). Instead, a mutually advantageous relationship based on Arab gift-giving and their provision of military contingents for campaigns became the norm (cf. p. 56). Antigonus' failure to conquer the tribes of semi-nomadic Nabataeans in 312 had shown the impracticability of a 'conquest' policy when applied to a non-sedentary people (D.S. XIX 94-96,1). Antiochus III's army had a large force (10,000) from the Arab sheikh Zebdibelos in 217; and his receipt of a huge surplus from the Gerrhaeans, in return for 'recognition of their independence', illustrates the benefits the state could acquire, without conquest, from this kind of relationship on the peripheries. Mountains and desert are the limits of direct rule and foster continuities of patterns of government.

Eastwards, in modern Iran, satrapal rule extended from Media (except Atropatene), Susiana, Persis, Carmania and Parataecene, beyond the Caspian Gates, linking the western plateau to 'Outer Iran': Hyrcania, Parthia, Aria, Margiana, Bactria-Sogdiana and Drangiana in southern Afghanistan on the easy southern route to India. North-west of Media, separated from the satrapy by a natural frontier of mountains, lay extensive territories independent of the Seleucid satrapies and ruled by Persian dynasts (Polyb. V 55,1). The most powerful in resources of military manpower and cavalry was the domain of Artabazanes (at the time of Antiochus III) ruling the 'satrapies' and adjacent tribes to the Caspian. This *arche* (realm) was not incorporated by Alexander and had been left independent; from Polybius' description this domain can probably be identified as that known otherwise as Media Atropatene. Chiefly because of his old age (so Polybius), and no doubt for political as well as military reasons, the local ruler made terms with Antiochus III. Antiochus' expedition 'to prevent their supplying or giving military aid to rebels' indicates a fear of (if not actual) collaboration between local dynasts and rebels in the context of Molon's revolt and reveals an understood pattern of co-operation between Greek and non-Greek groups and dynasts against the central power, reflected also, in actuality, in the Bactrian Greeks' revolt (see above p. 9).

North-west and beyond the Seleucid province of Bactria-Sogdiana lay Chorasmia (see Fig. 7), a region of towns in the delta of the Amu-Darya (Oxus). This area had been claimed as Achaemenid territory by Darius I (cf., e.g., DB I, 16), but was later independent in the fourth century. Alexander had made an 'alliance' with the king and left it unincorporated and independent (Q.C. VIII 1,8; Arrian *Anab*. IV 15,4-5). There is no direct evidence of political relations with the Seleucid kings, but contact and exchange with hellenistic Bactria are

well reflected in the local coinage and in material finds imitating Greek artefacts (Glaesser 1957/8; for settlement patterns and fortified sites, cf. Francfort 1988, 186-9; Will 1979, 269).

Seleucus saw the economic, political and military value of possessing the rich eastern satrapies like Bactria-Sogdiana; this is very clear. Demodamas of Miletus was given a military command campaigning across the river Jaxartes (Syr-Darya), which marked the northern frontier zone between nomadic tribes beyond the old Achaemenid empire, setting up – like Alexander – altars to his city's (and his king's) patron deity, Apollo of Didyma (Pliny *NH* VI 49; Holleaux 1938). The operation was possibly a show of force, primarily to check incursions from the steppe nomads whose destructive force is suggested by the case of the reported 'demolition' of Alexandria Margiana and at Termita. It is uncertain whether Demodamas' campaign belongs to Seleucus' original conquest of Bactria in which Demodamas certainly took part (date uncertain: Holleaux 1938; cf. below p. 26), or to later campaigns during Antiochus I's co-regency and rule in the east (292/1-281/0; for Seleucus I still sole ruler in September 292, cf. Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –291). Tarn's picture of widespread, devastating waves of barbarian incursions in 280 needs modifying and seems ill-founded (Tarn 1940; 1938, 117). It is in part exaggerated, based on Antiochus I's supposed renaming of a foundation of Alexander at Termita (modern Termez) as an Antioch, which is not supported by the literary evidence. The excavations at Ai Khanoum show no evidence of destruction in the Seleucid phase as would be required for this picture (Bernard 1967). Besides Demodamas, Patrocles (Pearson 1960, 163-4, 227-8, 231; Tarn 1938, 488-90), another comparatively well-known officer, high among the Friends of Seleucus I, was active in Bactria-Sogdiana, and was put in command by the kings (*c.* 285-2) to explore the Caspian and the possibilities of a link between the Caspian and the Oxus, which was thought to run into it. This project, which would have facilitated the movement of trans-Asian trade, is a good example of how these early hellenistic kings, with the fresh outlook characteristic of new rulers – possessors of a vast new kingdom – were aware of their realms as a complex whole and had, like Darius I and Alexander, a 'global' outlook in consciously planning the exploitation of their conquests. The military expeditions and the colonising activity, whose existence is only now being revealed by archaeology, reflects the unexpected (and largely unguessed) determination of the Seleucids to hold the province (Bactria-Sogdiana), reflected also in the heavy output of the Seleucid royal mints in Bactria under Antiochus I (Bernard 1985). This discovery alters our perspective on their attitude to the importance of the eastern satrapies to their empire (cf. Chapters 2-4). The northern frontier of outer Iran was too vast and inhospitable for any dynasty to wall off in the fashion

of the great wall of China; the only practical policy was fortresses and fortified cities, which did not stop invasions, but acted as deterrents against nomads and to protect the populations.

Consolidation and colonisation

This huge expansion was accompanied by a vast colonisation programme, greater in scale than Alexander's and different in character and function (cf. Chapters 4 and 6). Appian credits Seleucus with thirty-four dynastically named foundations: sixteen Antiochs, five Laodiceas, nine Seleucias, three Apameas and one Stratonicea (*Syr.* 57) and a string of other foundations given Greek names. This is an exaggeration – Seleucus alone being here credited with almost all of the Antiochs and Laodiceas, which is not historical truth as many of them were founded later. Definite foundations of Seleucus I are: Seleucia on the Calycadnus (Cilicia); in Syria, the tetrapolis of Seleucia-Pieria, Antioch-Orontes, Apamea in the middle Orontes valley, Laodicea-on-the-Sea; at the crossing of the Euphrates, Seleucia-Zeugma and Apamea (on the eastern bank) and Arethusa, the fortress of Dura-Europus on the mid-Euphrates and Beroea (ancient Halab, modern Aleppo); in the Fertile Crescent, Seleucia-Tigris and perhaps Edessa (later Antioch-Fairflowing in Osroene, modern Urfa, ancient Harran). In Babylonia, by the end of the third century, Apamea-Silhu (Mesene, *OGIS* 233), and in Susiana, Seleucia-Eulaeus at Susa and Seleucia-Hedyphon had been founded, as had Seleucia-on-the-Red Sea which, by nomenclature, should probably be attributed to the Seleucid satrapy of the Districts of the Red Sea (i.e. Arab-Persian gulf) and of which all could go back to the major colonising phase of either Seleucus, or his son Antiochus, as may the Seleucia surviving in the modern name Kerka Beth Sloq (= fortress of the home of Seleucus, modern Kerkuk, near the site of the Assyrian city of Arrapkha, cf. *RTP* 236 n. 66, 249 n. 191) and Seleucia (Sloq), modern Karkh Djuddan in Garame, in northern Mesopotamia (Chaumont 1971). In modern Iran, Seleucus refounded Rhagae (near modern Teheran) and is attributed by Appian with the foundation of Hecatompylus, possibly to be identified as the site of Shahr-i Qumis, where a British team undertook several campaigns excavating a vast archaeological area, although none of the several sites so far excavated goes back to the early Seleucid period, or corroborates an early date (for the probable identity of the site, cf. Hansman 1968; for bibliography of the excavations by Hansman and Stronach, cf. Vanden Berghe 1979, 25-6; Vanden Berghe/Haerinck 1981, 8; 1986, 18).

The extensive list of Seleucus' foundations is backed up by Antiochus I's further colonies in the Iranian satrapies and, after Corupedium, in Asia Minor. Antiochus I's foundations in the eastern satrapies include

Antioch-Persis, and the refoundation of Antioch-Margiana, 30 kilometres east of modern Merv, the oasis city excavated by Soviet archaeologists (Gyaur-Kale: a large rectangular site of 24 km, cf. Fig. 3); in Aria, Soteira, and in 'Scythia', another Antioch (Bernard 1982a). Other foundations are attributable to the early Seleucid period on the basis of archaeological discoveries: the first main phase of the site at Ai Khanoum on the River Oxus belongs to the early Seleucid period, not to the period of Alexander, to which the first, major monumental building is dated (Bernard 1982b). In the Arab-Persian gulf, the island of Failaka off Kuwait, 'discovered' by Alexander's Arabian exploratory expedition, was probably occupied by the Seleucids in the early third century (see below pp. 173-4).

In Asia Minor, the Seleucid presence and control was articulated through a series of new cities, mainly the work of the kings Antiochus I and II and symbolised by the renaming of cities under their sway: new foundations comprise Antioch-Lycus, Laodicea-Lycus, Apamea, Apollonia, Seleucia Sidera, Pisidian Antioch, Laodicea Catacecaumene, Phrygian Hierapolis and Carian Stratonicea (J. and L. Robert 1980, 378-9).

Seleucus' last years: the acquisition of Asia Minor

In the last two years of his reign, Seleucus pressed on with his policy of conquest. He knew of the disenchantment among supporters and cities of Lysimachus as a result of the murder of Lysimachus' son, Agathocles, and saw it as a good opportunity to crush Lysimachus' power. It was Seleucus, not Lysimachus, who initiated the conflict – in explanation of the war Justin described them both as men 'young in spirit and drawn by an insatiable lust for imperial conquest' (cf. Pausanias I 9,5; Memnon *FGrH* 434 F5,6). As heir to the empire of the Achaemenids and of Alexander, Anatolia was a predictable and attractive target for any king with a will for empire, like Seleucus, and strategically and economically desirable. The beginning of Seleucus' campaign against Lysimachus, which was to end in victory at Corupedium in Lydia (*c.* February 281), is dated by a valuable, fairly recently published fragment of the Babylonian Chronicle to the third month (Simanu) SE 30 (i.e. June-July 282; *ABC* 12, obv. 3-5, cf. Sherwin-White 1983a, 267-8). After the battle, inscriptions show that Seleucus and Antiochus began the immense task of systematically organising their relations with peoples and cities under Lysimachus' control before the battle – Greek cities, 'temple-states' and the peoples (tribal) of western Asia Minor – as embassies poured to them (cf. Mehl 1986, 285-315).

The new chronicle fragment confirms Seleucus' major objectives: in the spring of 281, one or two months after his victory, Seleucus'

invasion of Europe began (*ABC* 12 rev. 1-2: months I or II of SE 31), and he can now be seen to have devoted the five or six months before his assassination in month VI of this year (end August – end September) to this expedition. The objective of this campaign is described as 'Macedon, his land' and implies that Seleucus after Corupedium made a more specific claim to Lysimachus' European empire, which included Macedon and Thrace to the Danube, than is intimated by the Greek and Latin authors, talking vaguely of his *pothos* (longing) to see Macedon again. Like Antigonus, Seleucus desired no less than the reconstitution of Alexander's unified empire of Macedonia and Asia (Sherwin-White 1983a, 267-8). Ptolemy Thunderbolt (son of Ptolemy I and Eurydice) ended Seleucus' dream by assassinating the king near Lysimachea; whether Ptolemy was responsible for the army mutiny after the crossing (*ABC* 12, rev. l.4), we do not know. He was able to take over Seleucus' army and, with the opportunism so characteristic of the period, for a short time grabbed Lysimachus' possessions in Macedon and Thrace 'to avenge Lysimachus, his brother-in-law' (Justin XVII 2,6). He also annexed, in an arranged marriage, Lysimachus' wife and queen, Arsinoe, his half-sister and daughter of Ptolemy I and Berenice (this was not, in the eyes of many Greeks, an incestuous union, cf. Plutarch *Them*. 32; but for its un-Macedonian character, cf. Pausanias I 7,1). Whether Ptolemy had hoped for Seleucus' help in gaining the throne to which Ptolemy II had recently succeeded, or expected a kingdom in Macedon and Thrace, there is no sign Seleucus had had this in mind. It may be best to see this as adventurous opportunism, exploiting – within Lysimachus' domains – loyalty to Lysimachus' person and his status as the reigning king; Ptolemy was acclaimed king of Macedon by the army (Pomp. Trog. *Prol*. XVII; see for this period Longega 1968; Heinen 1972).

Creating a dynastic identity

The transformation from conquistador to king and founder of a dynasty took more than the adoption of a royal title and possession of an heir. Seleucus and Antiochus carefully and deliberately developed monarchic institutions emphasising their rule as a new dynastic operation, and adopting a centralising policy wherever feasible. At the royal mints, from east to west, coins with the legend bearing the king's personal name and title as king were minted and existing mints replaced Alexander with Seleucus (305/4, cf. *ESM* 10ff.; Waggoner 1969); the king issued royal decisions in edicts and letters in his name. In this Seleucus acted much like other Successors; but unique to the Seleucid empire was the introduction by Antiochus I of a new era used throughout the realm to date documents (written in Greek and

cuneiform Akkadian). Unlike Demetrius Poliorcetes and Ptolemy I (*c.* 300 and 283), Seleucus did not adopt as a regular policy the practice of placing his own royal portrait upon his coins. The vast majority of Seleucus' silver, bronze and gold issues from 306/5 to his death carry not Seleucus but a deity on the obverse. Possible exceptions to this are a set of silver issues from Susa and Persepolis which bear the helmeted and diademed head of a ruler, covered in panther skin with features of Alexander – possibly Seleucus (*ESM* 113ff., 55ff.; Hadley 1978), perhaps symbolising the Indian campaign. The real change comes with Antiochus I, who regularly has his own portrait, or that of his divinised father, on his coins (see below p. 28). Seleucus' coins have emblems personal to and symbolic of himself – the anchor, the bull symbol of Seleucus and the horned horse's head (cf. Plate 29). It is notable that Alexander's portrait is *not* used (cf. *WSM* 379-84 (Seleucus I), 384-7 (Antiochus I)). It is possible that the disappearance of most satrapal coin issues should be understood as the result of a deliberate centralising policy emphasising the chief authority of the king alone, who is the source of royal money, although it is a moot point whether Persian satraps were able to strike coins without royal authorisation (Briant 1989, 329). If so, the Seleucids abandoned an Achaemenid practice which had allowed satraps in western Asia Minor to mint in silver and bronze, usually to meet military expenditure (see below p. 63).

Early Seleucid dynastic policy is reflected in the cluster of family names chosen to designate the numerous new city foundations through Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Central Asia: the Antiochs, Laodiceas, Apameas, Stratoniceas as well as Seleucias, and in Antiochus I's renaming as Antiochs the various Alexandrias in Central Asia, e.g. Alexandria-Margiana and Alexandria-Furthest. In this way they deliberately differentiated their dynasty from Alexander. Gradually a dynastic iconography developed of which little survives except on coins, finger rings, and seals. These are interesting beause they record subjects and images thought to define the greatness of the king and his royal qualities, illustrating the king's piety and status as dear to the gods, his military achievements and, in the case of Seleucus, his physical strength, symbolised by the images of Zeus and Athena Nike in a war chariot drawn by Indian elephants, Seleucus in diademed helmet draped in panther skin, a charging bull (e.g. *ESM* 231ff.).

The Successors all learned from Alexander's disastrous failure to arrange for a successor and planned in good time for their own and, therefore, for a dynasty: only Lysimachus came unstuck. Seleucus acted a full decade before Ptolemy and, in 292, appointed his eldest son Antiochus king. This mechanism seems to serve two different ends. It was a kind of *pre-mortem* succession, used successfully, for example, by

medieval kings, and as such seems a far-sighted as well as pragmatic innovation. It was also a device for a redistribution of power, whether necessitated by external or internal reasons of state. The Seleucids normally followed the custom, from Seleucus I on, of appointing the first-born male heir to the throne. As a Milesian decree (299/8) attests, Antiochus (later I), now thirty-one, was the eldest son of Seleucus and Apame and, as Babylonian chronicle texts show (*ABC* 11, cf. Sherwin-White 1983a, 265-6), Seleucus had groomed him for the throne since Antiochus acted as crown prince (*mār šarri*) in Babylonia in the period before 292. Seleucus' second marriage to Stratonice, daughter of Demetrius Poliorcetes (290s), which produced a child, Phila (cf. Michel no. 1295), may have seemed a potential threat to Antiochus' position and that of Apame (if still alive), but was mainly dictated by politics, i.e. a (temporary) pact with Demetrius. The ensuing decisions, which resolved Antiochus' position, are clear; Antiochus was given the title and status of king; Stratonice was passed on to him by Seleucus as queen and wife, thus again strengthening the succession (Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991); Antiochus was then dispatched with his queen to the eastern satrapies to govern as king with full royal authority (and armies). It is wrong to see this as a simple carving up of the kingdom, and as Seleucus' abandonment to his son of the eastern half of his dominion, in which he had supposedly lost interest (*pace* scholars like Will 1979, 267). Coins from the royal mints of Babylonia and Ai Khanoum bear the names of both kings, as do cuneiform dating formulae (cf. Parker/Dubberstein 1956, 21). Seleucid interest did not, and could not, stop west of the Euphrates. In the west (Anatolia), both kings are addressed in official correspondence, which makes the point clear (*RC* 9). Seleucus recognised the need for consolidation in the Upper Satrapies and the need for royal authority to do it, which left him free to deal with problems in Syria and Anatolia (Demetrius, Lysimachus and Ptolemy). This seems to have been the political and military backcloth to the appointment of Antiochus in the Upper Satrapies. At Miletus (288/7: *RC* p. 36, *OGIS* 214, 2) the two Seleucid rulers were described as *basileis* in the published copy of Seleucus' letter and list of dedications to the sanctuary of Apollo at Didyma. Both in documents issued by the Seleucid, and by non-royal, authorities, Antiochus is king though Seleucus has precedence (and probably the ultimate authority).

The kings thus had their own vast regional spheres of operation but it would be wrong to see any very clear-cut or formal juridical basis to this, especially as royal power was not at this time identified with specific territorial space – the idea of territorial monarchy being a misleading modern concept (see below pp. 119-20). This policy of co-regency was an innovation in empire-running – there is no evidence of Achaemenid kings using their sons as co-rulers in quite this way (for

an apparent exception cf. Kuhrt 1988a, 125-6); the great military command vested in men like Cyrus the Younger, brother of the king, in western Asia Minor at the end of the Peloponnesian War, or Tissaphernes in the 390s, are not the same. It evolved because of the problems of security which size brought to the empire somewhat as, in the later Roman empire, Diocletian created the tetrarchy (cf. Briant 1990): the Seleucids recognised that, as Tarn said, 'the man on the spot must have the authority and power of decision which could only belong to a monarch' (Tarn 1940, 94).

This is the skeleton of extraordinary facts from which hellenistic authors built a court drama patterned on Euripides' play *Hippolytus*: Antiochus, pining to death with secret and illicit love for Seleucus' (second) wife, Stratonice, whose own feelings are characteristically omitted as unimportant, is saved by the stratagems of the Greek doctor, Erasistratus; the latter diagnoses Antiochus' sickness and is responsible for obtaining Seleucus' sympathy for its resolution (cf. Mehl 1986, 230-68). Other stories of illicit love notably centre on Stratonice, e.g. her alleged intimacy with Kumbabos (Lucian, *de dea Syria* 18-25) – one of Antiochus' 'Friends' (see below pp. 132-3) sent to assist in Stratonice's supervision of the rebuilding of a temple at Syrian Hierapolis, whose grotesque self-mutilation to prevent calumny at court before undertaking the protection of the king's wife, suggests that his character was in fact based upon the eunuch high-priest, the Gallus, of the Hierapolitan cult. It is impossible to sift political fact from the legendary accretions and romantic embellishments in these stories and foolish to try; Stratonice became story material. The Stratonice-Antiochus love story has apologetic overtones, propagandising the kingly virtues, wisdom and magnanimity of Seleucus I. What motives and intrigues, what *Realpolitik* lay behind this change, which seemed (to Greek sources) to remove Stratonice to a distance, when her father Demetrius Poliorcetes was on the run from Macedonia, and was later to send an embassy to Seleucus in 287 when he was seeking a kingdom in the east ('an *arche* among independent barbarians': Plutarch *Dem*. 46.4-5; 47.3-4), are uncertain (cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991).

This mechanism of early co-regencies was a peculiarity of the Seleucid empire and differs from Ptolemaic usage, where it was used only late in the reigns of rulers, i.e. focussed on the immediate succession. Seleucus I and his inheritors utilised it as a way to mitigate the difficulty of running a huge empire whose central power was solely the king.

An excellent example of how the royal family involved themselves actively in local affairs is provided by a dossier from Miletus. In 299, the Seleucid general, Demodamas of Miletus, proposed in his city two decrees honouring respectively Seleucus' queen, Apame, and her son,

the crown-prince Antiochus.

> (1) Decree of the people; proposal of the committee (*synedroi*): motion of Demodamas, son of Aristides; since Antiochus, the eldest son of King Seleucus, has never ceased to show the people of Miletus much good will and support; and since now seeing the great interest his father also shows to the sanctuary of Didyma, judging it good to follow the policy of his father, he announces that he will build ... in the city a stoa, of which the resources will give the people funds to pay for the building judged to be useful to carry out in the sanctuary of Didyma —— and (he also declares) that all the work carried out subsequently by means of this silver will be dedicated by him (to the god ...). (*IDidyma* 479)
>
> (2) The council (*boule*) and people (*demos*) decided, Lycus son of Apollodotus put the motion: about what Demodamas son of Aristides had submitted to the council, that Apame the wife of King Seleucus be honoured; the council and people decided; since Apame, the queen, before showed much goodwill and support to the Milesians campaigning with King Seleucus, and now on the arrival in her presence of the ambassadors whom Seleucus sent for from us, she has been especially zealous about the building of the temple at Didyma, and Antiochus her son has announced, honouring the policy of his father Seleucus [about the sanctuary of Didyma], that he would build [as quickly as possible in the city a stoa] ... to the god, in order that the revenues [from it might regularly accrue] and the sanctuary to be established ... . (Holleaux 1938, 110; *IDidyma* 480)

Apame's aid to the Milesian mercenary detachment evidently (from the chronology) belonged to Seleucus' campaigns of conquest in Bactria-Sogdiana (*c.* 307-305), Apame's homeland, where Demodamas served as a military commander (Robert 1984; above p. 19). The queen co-ordinated Antiochus' agreement to patronage for Miletus on the arrival of the Milesian embassy summoned by Seleucus. Several aspects are striking. The decrees emphasise that the decisions of Apame and Antiochus follow Seleucus' own policy of benefaction towards Miletus and Didyma and present an image of dynastic solidarity and of a collective familial operation that became characteristic of the Seleucid monarchy (cf. esp. Antiochus III, see below p. 208) and was fashioned early on. The political role which individual Greek officers played in connecting, at the cost of great effort, their own cities on the periphery of the kingdom to the central power, the king and court, is very well illustrated by the figure of Demodamas. Demodamas had campaigned with Seleucus in Bactria, was back in Miletus (300/299) after the battle of Ipsus, and then fought again as a military commander in Bactria-Sogdiana during either Antiochus' co-regency, or in his reign (Robert 1984). The problems of distance (and time), totally invisible in the documents, are bridged by enormous journeys across Anatolia and back; the royal family was

actively harnessed and made to mean something and be seen in a Greek city hundreds of miles from the heartland of the kingdom in Babylonia.

Demodamas' leading role in initiating the state's reciprocation of Apame's help, and in seeing to its practical execution via his appointment as one of the building commissioners, suggests that he was also behind Seleucus' initial summons for a Milesian embassy in the first place and the key figure in attracting Seleucid benefaction of Miletus and Didyma and, possibly, Seleucus' return of the cult-statue of Apollo removed by the Persians after the Ionian Revolt: behind the pattern of royal benefactions of Greek cities, lies also the pressure of groups of individuals at court, in this case the initiative of Greeks there (Robert 1984).

Antiochus I's grasp of the importance of developing the dynastic basis of a régime, if it was to enjoy more than the most transitory temporal power, is well shown by two new policies. At his accession, Antiochus innovated and authorised, against all precedent, the adoption of a dynastic era, so continuing the regnal era of Seleucus instead of beginning a new one of his own. Time became Seleucid, dynastic and continuous. Antiochus created a new chronological system, followed by subsequent Seleucid kings. The second development in the second generation of the Seleucids was the invention of a dynastic tradition and mythology anchoring Antiochus' kingship in a continuum of legitimate monarchy. It was easy to build on Seleucus' own well-known and widely advertised personal devotion to Apollo and upon Apollo's reciprocal care for Seleucus, already implicit in the royal patronage of Didyma (see p. 26). It is, thus, early in Antiochus' reign that Seleucus' filiation from Apollo and Apollo's status as founder of the *genos* (family) of the Seleucids was propagated and publicly accepted (cf. *OGIS* 219, cf. 212). Seleucus is identified and sung of in a paean as son of Apollo (Asclepius: Powell 1925, 140). The legend about Seleucus' birth, after the epiphany and sexual union of Apollo with his mother, may have begun to circulate now:

> ... He (sc. Seleucus), too, was illustrious for his bravery and for his miraculous origins. His mother, Laodice, who was married to Antiochus, one of Philip's famous generals, had a dream in which she saw Apollo unite himself with her and, having conceived, she received from the god, as a gift for her favours, a ring with a stone on which was engraved an anchor together with the demand that she give it to the son she would bear. This vision was even more amazing as a ring with the same engraving was found the following day in Laodice's bed, and Seleucus, when he was born, had an anchor marked on his thigh. For this reason when Seleucus was about to leave with Alexander the Great for his campaign to Persia, Laodice gave him the ring and told him about his origins. ... The sign of his origins even persisted among his descendants,

> because his sons and grandsons had an anchor on their thigh, as though it were a natural family-mark. (Justin XV 4,3-6; cf. Appian *Syr*. 56)

Linked to this were anecdotes recounting early prophecies presaging his kingship although the date when they became current is not known (Appian *Syr*. 56). But they and the story illustrating his physical strength and courage, always an important element in royal ideology (see below p. 129), could well have been broadcast around now:

> As he was very successful in war he acquired the surname Nicator. ... He was of such a large and powerful frame that once when a wild bull was brought for sacrifice to Alexander and broke loose from his ropes, Seleucus held him alone, with nothing but his hands, for which reason his statues are ornamented with horns. (Appian *Syr*. 57)

Reflecting these developments are two major changes made early on in the iconography of Seleucid coinage – first, Antiochus' own diademed portrait is employed as a regular emblem on the obverse of Antiochus' coins from early in his reign, thus marking a distinct break with past practice (cf. above p. 23); secondly, Apollo, founder of the dynasty, replaces Zeus, father of the gods, who of all deities had appeared most on Seleucus I's coins (*ESM* passim; *WSM* passim). These changes are clear.

Emphasis on the origins of the new dynasty from Apollo and of Seleucus as son of a god is part of Antiochus I's attempt to establish the dynasty. The historical context and inspiration was possibly the establishment of a cult for Seleucus, after his death, at Seleucia-Pieria (cf. below pp. 171-2), where Antiochus buried his remains and raised a 'temple' over them (Appian *Syr*. 63). The *heroa* at Ai Khanoum and at Belevi give an idea of what the building may have originally been like (cf. *CAH* VII.1, pls. 243 a,b; Pollitt 1986, 289-90).

The *progonoi* (ancestors) of the king emerge now as a focus for the expression of loyalism from outside (*OGIS* 222; Austin 143: decree of the League of Ionians) and as an expression of collective monarchism from inside. These developments, a new dynastic era, dynastic foundations, and ancestral and civic ruler cults were employed *inter alia* to widen, stabilise and structure the power base of the Seleucid monarchy by giving it institutional and collective forms. Kingship was translated from a one-man show into the task of a hereditary family group (Weber 1947/1964, 363-73).

Conserving Seleucus' heritage: Antiochus I

There was no crisis over the succession, no challenge to Antiochus at court, when Seleucus was suddenly murdered at Lysimachea by Ptolemy Thunderbolt. Antiochus was already acting as co-king. The

use of this mechanism had worked effectively and seems to have limited the need for the ritual elaboration of king-making procedures (see below p. 125), which remained rudimentary (Plutarch *Dem.* 38). But Antiochus' accession to what was, in public documents, termed his paternal empire (*arche*) had to be established, in many major regions, by military force in contrast to Ptolemy II's easy take-over of Egypt. This stabilisation took Antiochus about a decade to achieve. A Greek decree from Ilium, dating from after the troubles, reveals that in Syria (Seleucis) the *poleis* (cities) revolted. These are likely to be the new royal Greek city foundations of Seleucus I himself:

> When Nymphius son of Diotrephes was *epimenios*, and Dionysius son of Hippomedon was president, Demetrius son of Dies moved: 'Since King Antiochus, son of King Seleucus, having in the beginning taken over the kingdom and pursued a glorious and honourable policy, has sought to bring back to peace and their former prosperity the cities of the Seleucis which were suffering from difficult times because of the rebels from his cause, and after attacking those hostile to his interests, as was just, (has sought) to recover his ancestral rule; and therefore has embarked upon an honourable and just enterprise, and with not only the ready assistance of his "Friends" and his military forces in his fight for his interests but also the goodwill and collaboration of the deity, has restored the cities to peace and the kingdom to its former state; and (since) now he has come to the provinces this side of Mount Taurus with all zeal and enthusiasm and has at once restored peace to the cities and has advanced his interests and the kingdom to a more powerful and more brilliant position most of all through his own excellence but also through the goodwill of his "Friends" and his military forces ...'. (*OGIS* 219; Austin 139)

An attempt by Ptolemy to win over Seleucid factions in the Seleucid cities is the usual conjecture to explain this unrest – the old king was dead in the far west and the new king was in the distant east.

The evidence for non-Greek opposition to Antiochus from within the empire is more limited and the situation here more difficult to evaluate. Was there less? In the heart of Persia, at Pasargadae, archaeological evidence attesting a destruction level in the Achaemenid citadel can be dated by the coin evidence to coincide with the end of the reign of Seleucus I, and has been linked, quite plausibly, to anti-Seleucid Persian reaction in Persis at Seleucus' death (Stronach 1978, 155-6; Will 1979, 280-1). The other signs of trouble in Persis are an undatable mutiny of three thousand Persian troops in Persis which a Seleucid commander solved by their massacre by Macedonian and Thracian infantry and cavalry (Polyaenus VII 39); there is also a report of the massacre of three thousand dissident *katoikoi* ('settlers') in Persis by the local soldiers who were billeted there (led by Oborzes; Polyaenus VII 40). The emergence of a local Persian dynasty in Persis

later at Istakhr is attested by beautiful silver coins of Greek model naming Bagadates and Vahuburz (= Obarzos) as *frataraka* ('governor', cf. Frye 1984, 114; Wiesehöfer 1991), but is now generally dated to the second century (Koch 1988; Wiesehöfer 1986; 1988; in press; cf. below pp. 76-7; 226). But the predominant pattern of third-century Iran is the Seleucids' continuing effort to hold Persis, witnessed by Antiochus I's reinforcement of the Greek *polis* of Antioch-Persis (*OGIS* 233; Austin 190; quoted below pp. 163-4), also by early hellenistic Greek altars from Persepolis attesting indirectly the Seleucid presence there (unfortunately still not published, Robert 1967; below p. 76), and by the status of Persis as a Seleucid satrapy in the third century (as well as Media, Hyrcania and others, cf. Chapter 3). Furthermore the centre of the Seleucid empire held – Babylonia remained loyal in spite of severe hardship (see below pp. 35; 46-7). The transit of military supplies and war elephants from the satrap of Bactria via the satrapy of Babylonia to the king in Syria (SE 38 = 274/3) proves Antiochus' grasp of the east and of the strategic key satrapies of Media through to Bactria plus Babylonia with its rich resources (cf. Bernard 1989, 303-7).

Antiochus' main preoccupation was following up the conquests of Seleucus. The local historian, Memnon, appreciated the enormous task Antiochus undertook in reclaiming his father's empire 'not in its entirety, with difficulty and only by many wars' (*FGrH* 434 F15 (a)); he rightly saw that the major problems were the vast geographical areas over which Antiochus had to campaign and the number of formidable enemies the king faced, as he describes, *seriatim*, the wars Antiochus and his Seleucid forces fought to re-establish the *arche* (cf. also the papyrus fragment of a Seleucid history referring to this as a major achievement, see below p. 136). Antiochus had a horrendous task in Anatolia. First, he had to consolidate Seleucid control of the empire won at Corupedium from Lysimachus; secondly, he had to ensure that the submission of the cities, dynasts and 'temple-states' to Seleucus and to himself following from their victory held good. A basic historical framework for his wars there is provided by Memnon of Heraclea Pontus, writing in the Roman empire, who used as his source for this period a contemporary eyewitness, Nymphis. Nymphis' own history now survives only in the summary of Memnon's abbreviated version made by the ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople, Photius (*FGrH* 434). The account has a strong city-centred patriotic theme of the struggle of Heraclea for independence from a local tyrant dynasty and then from hellenistic kings.

Seleucid policy in the aftermath of victory is opaque – an inscribed archive from Nysa (Caria) casts important light because it attests that Seleucus and Antiochus both confirmed the autonomous status and immunity from tribute of the sanctuary at Nysa of the Athymbriani and announced this as a general principle of their policy for their

treatment of 'the Greeks' and their sanctuaries:

> King Seleucus and Antiochus to Sopatrus, [greeting]. The Athymbriani [having sent] to us [as envoys] Iatrocles, Artemidorus, and Timotheus in the matter of their [right of receiving suppliants, their inviolability, and their tax-exemption], we have [...] the details and have written to you [that you may give them a formal] reply. [For our policy is always] through benefactions [to please] the citizens [of the Greek cities and] with reverence to join in increasing [the honours] of the gods, [so that we may be the object of good-will] transmissible for all time [to those who come after] us. We are convinced that before this also we have given [many great] proofs of our personal [reverence, and] now also, [wishing] to be consistent with [our actions from the beginning], we grant to all the temples which have the right of inviolability .... (*RC* 9)

This was good public relations. Memnon's story of Heraclea Pontus records that Seleucus expected the Greeks who had been under Lysimachus to submit and respect his authority as victor to decide their status. Heraclea Pontus is one place we know of which was inspired by Lysimachus' death to aim for independence. Seleucus appointed a *dioiketes* (financial official), Aphrodisias, over the 'cities of Phrygia and along the Black Sea' *inter alia* to test loyalty. Aphrodisias had reported Heraclea hostile to Seleucid interests and the result eventually had been an angry abortive audience between Seleucus and the city embassy (cf. below p. 137).

The case of Heraclea Pontus is a good example. The general view has been that Lysimachus was particularly severe in the exploitation and political oppression of the Greek cities and that the apparently eager adherence of cities to the Seleucids can be explained in terms of this. This approach has to be modified since it is based on a serious misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the documentary evidence – which shows that Lysimachus was no more repressive than other Successors in the treatment of Greek cities (Burstein 1980; 1986a; 1986b). Dismay and horror at the murder of Agathocles, which perhaps made Lysimachus' dynasty seem dangerously unstable, and victory are what made Seleucus the ruler of the day. In the case of Heraclea the citizens saw a chance for independence and bravely seized it, knowing that 'the kings were against democracy' i.e. the free working of popular government.

Besides the problem of the adhesion of Lysimachus' possessions, as illustrated by Heraclea Pontus, Antiochus also inherited the enmity of Anatolian dynasts independent of, and hostile to, Lysimachus. In Bithynia and Pontus, two regions *later* to become powerful kingdoms, the dynasts Zipoetes and Mithridates took the royal title 'king' (*basileus*) after military victories over Lysimachus and over troops of Seleucus I, memorable proof that military victory, especially over

kings, was seen to be revelatory of royal capacity and justified kingship, and that this held also for non-Greek dynasts already patterning their authority on the Successors (see Chapters 2 and 5). Antiochus I faced a powerful coalition engineered by Nicomedes of Bithynia, from Antigonus Gonatas, Byzantium, and Heraclea and also a steady encroachment on Seleucid possessions by Ptolemy II, down the length and breadth of coastal Anatolia. This already difficult situation was exacerbated by the presence and extensive use of Celtic warrior groups.

The military relations of Nicomedes with the Celtic warrior tribes, the Trocmi and Tectosages, seemed designed to help to establish him in power and eradicate opposition from the Bithynians in return for the tribes' admission to Asia Minor. They were able to prosper by employing the two factors which characterise them as warrior societies in Europe: pillage and war (plus sale of profits) against the rich territories of cities and temples (or payoffs: e.g. Heraclea and Erythrae) and entering into military relations with local rulers and with kings in Greece (Pyrrhus; Antigonus Gonatas) and Asia Minor, ending in colonisation. The use of Celts as mercenaries was not new – Alexander had used them and a fine gem (Plate 1; cf. Boardman 1970, 320 and fig. 309) with an Aramaic inscription, dated to the early hellenistic period, actually shows a specifically Celtic warrior practice, named *trimarkisia*, described by Pausanias:

> The army that gathered was a hundred and fifty-two thousand infantrymen and twenty thousand horsemen: that was the number of the cavalry always in action, but the real number was sixty-one thousand two hundred, as there were two grooms to each horseman, all mounted and good riders. When the Gaulish cavalry were in battle, the grooms would stay behind the ranks and make themselves useful with new mounts when a horse or rider fell, but when a man was killed the slave would mount the horse in place of his master. If man and horse both died he was ready mounted. When they were wounded, one of the slaves took away the wounded man to camp, while another stepped into the line in his place. I believe this Gaulish custom was an imitation of the Persian Ten Thousand who were called Immortals. But the difference was that the Persians enrolled men in place of the dead after the battle, but the Gauls at the height of fighting kept the number of their horsemen complete. In their own language they called this division *trimarkisia*; you should realise that *marka* is the Celtic word for 'horse'. (Pausanias X 19,6)

The Celtic tribes had already reached the Balkan peninsula at the turn of the fifth to fourth centuries, advanced inland from the Illyrian coast (Justin XXIV 4,2-4) and defeated the Pannonians. Those Celts from the Po Valley had also opened relations with Alexander (*philia* and *xenia*: Strabo VII 3,8; Ptol. *FGrH* 138 F2; Arrian *Anab.* I 4,6), and their

employment in early hellenistic satrapies of the east is suggested by the gem.

In the first years the Celtic tribes brought fears, dangers and expense to countryside and town; the cities were left to buy, or fight, off individual attacks – an example of such an isolated action is contained in the inscription set up by Priene to honour one of its citizens, Sotas:

[In the year in which the] *stephanophoros* was Pos[e]id[on]i[o]s, month [Artem]ision, [it was resolved by the Council] and the People.

[Sotas in] both former [times] the [... applied] himself to [what was advantageous] to the people; and now [when first the G]alatians [arrived in the] countryside and many [of those] in the countryside [who were politically hostile] to the citizens [...] lawlessly wishing to attack [...] savagery no one resisted [...] and not only in the countryside did they commit [outrages] against their prisoners [... but they also] committed sacrilege against the divinity by ravaging the sacred precincts and [the altars] and temples [...] omitting no disgraceful act toward the divinity. [And] during their withdrawal, [...] they set fire to [all] the farm buildings [... whence] it happened that many of the Greeks inhabiting Asia were killed, [since they were unable] to resist the barbarians. But the people [of the Prieni]ans and he drew up in opposition and warded off the barbarians who were committing sacrilege against the divinity and outrages against the Greeks by dispatching paid citizen infantry and other cavalry and advancing(?) in full force. Sotas, moreover, having recruited the [best] of the citizens and from the country people those [who were eager] to [join in the fight] with the citizens against the barbarians, and having decided to save the citizens in the countryside, themselves and their children and wives and [property in] the countryside, in order to bring them safely into the city, occupied in the countryside the [most strategic] places [...] with his comrades in danger, and many of the citizens [...] being led away captive [by] the Galatians [and] some [...] he saved, [having dared (to face)] their savagery. Having decided(?) [...] for the citizens, keeping together those who with him were risking their lives [for the sake of] the common salvation of the [people], he remained in the countryside [fighting against] the barbarians [...] with himself many of the citizens, and in general [...] against the barbarians and coming to the rescue of the countryside. In addition, he continually [acted so] that [the city] in no way suffered evil and that many of the citizens [survived] and that they and their children and their wives and their land and possessions were saved and brought into the city. After these events took place, the people applied itself boldly to the Galatian war. (Since these things are so), with good fortune, it has been resolved by the Council and the People that Sotas, son of Lykos, be praised for the [excellence] and bravery he displayed on behalf of the people by nobly fighting against the Galatians, and that he be crowned with a wreath of leaves in the theatre during the tragic contest at the next Dionysia. In addition, the *agonothetes* (president of the games) shall provide for [the proclamation]. In order, therefore, that [the] attitude [of our] people toward [good and noble men who desire] eagerly and unhesitatingly to aid [...] may be [clear to all] and that the wreath

awarded to Sotas may be conspicuous, [this decree] shall be inscribed on a stone stele and set up in the sanctuary of [A]then[a].

As for the expenditure for the stele and the [inscription of this] decree, it shall be provided from the sacred monies by the *neopoios* (temple administrator), Pammenes. (*OGIS* 765; Burstein 17)

Antiochus was the first king to organise a sizeable army, impose a tax (*Galatikon*) and finally win a decisive victory over the Celts at the Battle of the Elephants, where the Gauls' terror, because they were unfamiliar with war-elephants, was decisive in their defeat (cf. Lucian, *Zeuxis* 8-11; Appian *Syr.* 65). This triumph kept the Gauls quiet until the War of the Brothers (between Seleucus II and Antiochus Hierax, *c.* 241-235). Livy's source ignores Antiochus I's campaigns and victory and exaggerates Attalus' role including the fake Attalid boast that Attalus I (241-197) had been the first to refuse the Gauls 'danegeld' (Livy XXXVIII 12-27).

The major work of Antiochus I, popular with and crucial for Greek and non-Greek inhabitants, was the control and defeat of these Galatian tribes, penning them back to an area of some 350 by 250 km within the Halys region. This area in time proved too small, and further problems were generated, underplayed by Roman writers who like to see Rome as the tamer of Gauls. Antiochus was acclaimed *soter* (saviour) by the Greek cities for this. After this, Cappadocia was under a Seleucid *strategos* (governor), Pontus and Bithynia were independent; at Pergamum, Philetaerus kept loyal to the Seleucids. Antiochus made peace with Antigonus Gonatas of Macedon in about 277. After the Galatian war, there was time for consolidation in Asia Minor, where some major cities were built by the Seleucids – e.g. Hierapolis in Phrygia, Apamea-Celaenae, Laodicea-Catacecaumene, Stratonicea in Caria.

Ptolemy's naval power and therefore activity took off again (after the devastating defeat at Salamis, off Cyprus, in 306) in the 280s. It is probably right to connect this in part with Ptolemy's recovery, before 286, of the Phoenician cities and therefore of the Phoenician fleets. He launched distant operations to win bases in the Cyclades (Andros) and to support Athens, challenging Demetrius Poliorcetes and establishing Ptolemaic control of the Nesiotic League in the Cyclades. It seems to have been the upheaval in the Seleucid empire caused by Seleucus' assassination that encouraged Ptolemy II (283-246) to seize other city-states, through the take-over of Lysimachus' possessions in the Greek islands (for example, Samos in *c.* 280) and coastal cities of Asia Minor (e.g. *c.* 280 Halicarnassus, Myndus, places in Lycia, such as Aspendus). In any case some hostilities broke out, known now by the label 'First Syrian War', which sounds clearer than the facts suggest (Beloch 1925-7: 1, 585; Will 1979, 146-50).

There was a violent disagreement between the historians Tarn (1926) and Otto (1928, 1-29) over the duration (276-1 or 274-1) and scale of the 'First Syrian War' between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, which for Tarn formed a coherent series of global hostilities recalling the internal power struggles of the Successors. A Babylonian astronomical diary of the reign of Antiochus I is the prime document attesting conflict in 'Syria' between Egypt and Antiochus (quoted below, pp. 46-7). Our literary sources, possibly suspect, present Antiochus and Ptolemy's half-brother, Magas, as initiators of a military entente, which for Antiochus meant cancelling his father's *status quo* of non-action over Coele-Syria (Pausanias I 7,3), and for Magas an attack on Alexandria to get the throne; the pact was cemented by a marriage alliance between Antiochus' daughter, Apame, and Magas.

The Babylonian astronomical diary mentioned above (for text, see below pp. 46-7) alone signals the scale of trouble between Seleucids and Ptolemies. Antiochus with his queen was in Sardis for war in western Asia Minor and supplies from the empire for the war in Syria were posted on even from Bactria. Next, Ptolemy II's army appeared to manoeuvre near the Euphrates in Syria and to retreat before Antiochus' forces. Coele-Syria and Phoenicia remained Ptolemaic, except for Damascus, which at some point Antiochus I captured, but it was again Ptolemaic in 259.

The 'Pithom stele', an Egyptian hieroglyphic account of the reign of Ptolemy II found at Tell el-Maskhuta (ancient Pithom, Greek Heroonpolis), states that between the years 6 and 12 (i.e. 280-274):

> His Majesty went to Teshit at the entrance to the South. He reached the land of Parsetet (= ?Persia/?Palestine), and found the gods of Egypt, whom he brought back. (Brugsch/Erman 1894, line 11)

Tarn (1929) connected this with Ptolemy II's campaign in an area of north-west Arabia once ruled by the Achaemenids, the Hijaz coast, and linked it with his campaign against Nabataeans (Agatharchides in D.S. III 43,4-5 = Burstein 1989, 151 (90a), cf. Fraser 1972 II, 300 n. 350), thus divorcing it from the Syrian War, which is a possibility. The problem in accepting that the text may refer to Persia, as argued by, for example, Otto (1928, 5; 10), is contemporary Greek ignorance of south-east Arabia, which rules out a circumnavigation at this date to the Arab-Persian Gulf, as envisaged by him and others (cf. Tarn 1929; Salles 1987, 109 n. 45; 1988). It seems clear that the claim of Ptolemy's recovery of (Egyptian) gods, which it was traditional for hellenistic kings of Egypt to make, could reflect campaigns against Seleucid (and so Achaemenid) lands, in which case a more likely understanding of '*Prstt*', than either Tarn's or Otto's, would be 'Palestine' (cf. Lorton

1971; Bernard 1989, 304-5; 1990a, 535-6). But we are dealing here with standardised propaganda: the stele is composed in traditional formulae of the time when pharaohs campaigned against Asia, and thus typically presents Ptolemy recovering the tribute of the cities of Asia, cutting off numerous heads, shedding rivers of blood and facing vast armies. This is standard royal rhetoric without historical confirmation.

Pausanias (I 7) links the marriage alliance between Antiochus I and Magas, ruler of Cyrene and full brother of Ptolemy II, with an agreement on Antiochus' part to break the peace Seleucus had agreed with Ptolemy (I) and attack Egypt, a step effectively prevented by Ptolemy's multiple and widespread attacks on the Seleucid empire. If the aim was to replace Ptolemy II by Magas, in return for Coele Syria, which is far from certain, things did not work out this way. Antiochus' empire in north Syria and eastwards was intact, with a frontier with Egypt's possessions in the south around the river Eleutheros (Seyrig 1951b), leaving the powerful city of Aradus Seleucid (Austin 144). In fact, as has already been indicated, the main struggle was in Asia Minor.

By the close of the 270s, two major wars, the Galatian war and the war with Ptolemy II, had been terminated. Peace was restored in the Seleucid kingdom and commemorated by both Greek and non-Greek inhabitants. The next decade (260s) Antiochus devoted to consolidation, leaving Antigonus and Ptolemy to squander their resources over the control of Athens and the Cyclades in the famous conflict known as the Chremonidean war (*c.* 268-263/2) from which Antiochus, wisely, kept well clear, perhaps recognising it as peripheral to an empire based on the middle east, to which 'control of the seas' in the Aegean and control of mainland Greece were of marginal importance (cf. the similar Achaemenid policy once the empire was solidly established). A Babylonian perspective on this period as inaugurating change and restoration is mirrored in the famous building inscription, in cuneiform Akkadian, of Antiochus I from the foundations of the temple of Ezida in Borsippa near Babylon (dated to 268; cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991 for full discussion):

> Antiochus, the great king, the mighty/legitimate king, king of the world, king of Babylon, king of lands, caretaker of Esagila and Ezida, first son of Seleucus, the king, the Macedonian, king of Babylon, am I.
>
> When I decided to build Esagila and Ezida, the bricks for Esagila and Ezida I moulded with my pure hands (using) fine quality oil in the land of Hatti and for the laying of the foundation of Esagila and Ezida I brought (them). In the month of Addaru, on the twentieth day, year 43 (i.e. 27 March, 268), the foundation of Ezida, the true temple, the house of Nabû which is in Borsippa I did lay.
>
> (O) Nabû, lofty son, wise one of the gods, the proud one, worthy of

praise, most noble son of Marduk, offspring of Erua, the queen, who formed mankind, regard (me) joyfully and, at your lofty command which is unchanging, may the overthrow of the countries of my enemies, the achievement of my battle-wishes against my enemies, permanent victories, just kingship, a happy reign, years of joy, children in satiety, be (your) gift for the kingship of Antiochus and Seleucus, the king, his son, for ever.

Prince Nabû, son of Esagila, first-born of Marduk, noble child of Erua, the queen, on your entry to Ezida, the true house, the house of your Anu-ship, the dwelling which pleases your heart, with rejoicing and jubilation, may – at your true command which cannot be denied – my days be long, my years many, my throne firm, my reign long-lasting, under your lofty sceptre which sets the boundary between heaven and earth. May my good fortune be in your pure mouth, may I conquer the countries from sunrise to sunset, may I gather their tribute with my hands and bring (it) for the perfection of Esagila and Ezida.

(O) Nabû, first son, when you enter Ezida, the true house, may favour for Antiochus, king of lands, (and) favour for Seleucus, the king, his son, Stratonice, his consort, the queen, be in your mouth. (Weissbach 1911, 132-5; *ANET* 317; Austin 189; Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991)

It is probably no accident that this building was undertaken after the Syrian War; Antiochus' building at Borsippa (and Babylon) is vital, as it is linked in language, titulature and pattern to the texts of the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar II, in whose tradition Antiochus seems implicitly to stand (cf. Kuhrt 1987a, 55-6). The note of concord with Babylonian tradition and with Babylonian gods, whatever else it is meant to signify, can ostensibly be understood as intentional Seleucid policy (from Seleucus I on) of using Babylonian kingship as a vehicle for rule in Babylonia.

Archaeology has restored some reality to the record of this great reign (see below Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6), – perhaps reflected in his being titled 'Antiochus, the Great King' in some Babylonian texts (Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –261: left edge 1; 1989, no. –260: upper edge 1). Antiochus' energy and success were matched by the firmness of purpose characteristic of strong rule; we know from Babylonian documents that his eldest son Seleucus had for over ten years, from shortly after his accession (279), held the royal title until *c*. 267/6; after which he disappears from the dating formulae and is replaced by another son, Antiochus. In the early 260s Antiochus had him executed (Trog. *Prol*. XXVI) and replaced him as co-*basileus* with Antiochus (later II), who, despite some upheavals reported in Babylonia between 262 and 261 (Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –261; cf. Bernard 1989, 306-7), acceded smoothly to the throne on Antiochus I's death at the age of 64 in late 261. None of this was foreseen in early 268 when the cylinder inscription from Borsippa emphasises Seleucus as king with Antiochus and clearly looks forward to Seleucus' succession when it calls for Nabû's blessing for Antiochus, his son, Seleucus, and for Stratonice.

Conclusions

As we are now in a much better position to appreciate, the Seleucids, as heirs to the Achaemenid empire, inherited an approach to imperial rule in which texts and the visual imagery of the great imperial palaces, e.g. at Babylon, Ecbatana, Susa, Persepolis and Pasargadae, glorified and proclaimed a unified and potentially unifying programme of beneficent rule (Root 1979), which may also have been reproduced in some of the satrapal and local courts through the empire (cf. Davesne/Lemaire/Lozachmeur 1987, 362-5). The question arises as to how the Seleucids reacted to these royal traditions, which are now better understood. Older views of the Seleucids as preservers of an abrasive Macedonian kingship, abandoning even Alexander's attempts to use non-Greek expertise (especially in the army) and to assimilate aspects of Achaemenid royal ideology, can now be dismissed (cf. below Chapters 2, 5, 6). There is every reason to suppose that the Seleucids continued some aspects of Alexander's political approaches (high-level matrimonial alliances with non-Greek dynasts, inside and outside the empire; use of non-Greeks in the army, administration and at court, and in the infrastructure) – the Seleucid dynasty was, after all, half Iranian (Sherwin-White 1987). Indeed, over eighty years after Seleucus I's assumption of the title of king, the Seleucid king, Antiochus III, married (in 221) the daughter of the Iranian king, Mithridates of Pontus – the theme is obvious. The problem of grafting on to the simpler Macedonian style and practice of autocracy, the grandeur, hierarchy and courtly royal ideology of the Achaemenids remained. The assimilation of some Achaemenid practices under Alexander continued under the Seleucids. We are not in a position to state categorically that Achaemenid court ceremony was abandoned, not least because we mainly lack Seleucid period imperial architecture and royal decorative reliefs, as well as contemporary literary sources.

The Seleucids, like the Achaemenids, continued to have several 'capitals', where the kings resided (Antioch, Seleucia-Tigris, Ecbatana, Susa, Sardis); they may have used the old Achaemenid palace of Darius at Susa, where the Seleucids certainly kept up a royal court, and used the Achaemenid palaces at Ecbatana (Strabo XI 13,5). They surrounded themselves and were surrounded by Achaemenid (as well as Babylonian) royal architecture and art. As we now know, from the excavations at Vergina in Macedon, the Seleucids had a Macedonian tradition of palaces to import when, in their new Greek capitals in the east, they needed them. In their deliberate use of Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid traditions in architectural building, in dimensionality and in grandiosity, the Seleucids built, in a concrete fashion, upon the traditions of their near eastern predecessors.

Furthermore, in Babylonia (in chronicle fragments, building

inscriptions and astronomical 'diaries'), the Seleucid kings present a coherent picture of rulers who are no foreign enemy but constitute a legitimate and just dynasty, attuned to local gods and actively participating in cults. Here, the tradition of Babylonian kingship gave king and subject a framework to operate in. Antiochus I, thus, personally participated in the foundation ceremonies of the rebuilding of the temples of Nabû at Borsippa and Bel-Marduk at Babylon (Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991) and presented himself to Babylonians as a king fulfilling the duties of a kingship in which the king was responsible for everything (Sherwin-White 1983b). From outside the Seleucid kingdom, Egyptian texts also express a perception of the Seleucid inheritance of Achaemenid kingship roles: the Seleucid king is presented as the illegitimate holder of treasures ransacked long ago by Achaemenid kings (238: *OGIS* 56; Austin 222; cf. Satrap's stele (311), Brugsch 1871), reflecting Egyptian expressions of a traditional enmity against the Persian conquerors, which the Seleucids inherited (and the Ptolemies made use of) and which was a reality in relations between the two hellenistic kingdoms and in contemporary Egyptian attitudes to the Seleucid kings. The Seleucid kings seem effectively to have taken on, and could be felt to have fulfilled, some aspects of their Achaemenid and Babylonian inheritance.

CHAPTER TWO

The Seleucid Empire in the Third Century

The aim of this chapter is to explore some central questions about the character and impact of the Seleucid empire in the century of its greatest geographical extent and greatest strength – the third century.

Defining the Seleucid state

First, what type of state was the Seleucid state? What relations bound centre to subjects and to the periphery? How did contemporaries refer to it? A loyalist decree from Ilium, honouring Antiochus I (*OGIS* 219; Austin 139; Burstein 15), gives a representative sample of the terms used in the contemporary Greek world to describe the Seleucid state – viz. 'kingdom' (*basileia*) and 'empire' (*arche*). These terms are echoed in Babylonia, where the Seleucid rulers are normally termed just 'kings' (*šarru*), in contrast to Persian and earlier rulers who were defined territorially. One factor about the Seleucid kingdom, at least, is indisputable: it was an empire, meeting two of the most basic criteria of imperial rule, i.e. (a) where one state, or central power, encompassing a large territory and incorporating a number of societies, often heterogeneous in geography and culture, dominates the others by military conquest and military force, and uses the surpluses of the subordinated 'countries'; (b) there exists some sort of overarching administrative framework, which may be loose or tight. The state is created by conquest (Alexander the Great and Seleucus I) and perpetuated by military constraint (armies, colonies, military expeditions, garrisons), which permits the levy of tribute and service from the subjugated peoples. This broad definition the Seleucid kingdom fits.

One simplistic categorisation of the Seleucid empire can be rejected out of hand. This is the idea – recently revived – of the Seleucid kingdom as having a federal structure (Musti 1966; 1984). This view is derived from references in some Greek documents to cities (*poleis*) in

the kingdom and to the occasional use of the verb for being in alliance (*symmachein*) to describe relations between king and 'subject'. The crucial point here is that there are no federal institutions or representative bodies to voice the policies and interests of those under the king's control analogous to those familiar from mainland Greece, such as the Peloponnesian league, the league of Corinth, or the Greek federal leagues of the hellenistic period. The king's power is not limited (even theoretically) by the existence of federal institutions. *Symmachia* and *symmachein* are used variously; in dealing with subordinate places, the words may mean no more than that the cities are on the king's side and are under oath to send troops, are militarily his allies – but there is no federal state. Secondly, rare examples of *symmachiai* as bilateral treaties do exist, e.g. treaties between king and *polis* (or other groups) in which both are (nominally anyway) treated as equal powers. The, at present, unique example of a treaty between a Seleucid king and a Greek *polis* is the important *symmachia* preserved on a copy from Ilium between Antiochus I (or II) and Lysimachea, the former capital of king Lysimachus, in Thrace:

> The king swears:
> [I swear by Zeus, Earth, Sun and all the other gods and goddesses] to abide by the [friendship and] alliance which I have made [...] of the descendants [...] just as I have agreed and I shall preserve the city [in autonomy and] in democracy [...] and ungarrisoned [and exempt from tribute]. If anyone makes war [either on the city] of the Lysimacheans or their forts [or their] territory, I shall come to their aid just as I have agreed, employing the harbours of the Lysima[cheans] as bases, by means of those (forces) which I shall designate [and] just as I specified in the treaty, and I shall not abandon the alliance [which] I have made with the Lysimacheans in any way or on any pretext, provided they also abide by their alliance with me. May my affairs prosper if I keep my oath, and the opposite if I forswear.
> Oath of the Lysimacheans:
> I swear by [Z]eus, Earth, Sun, Poseidon, [Deme]ter, Apollo, Ares, Athena [Ar]ei[a and] the Tauropolos and all the [other] gods and goddesses to abide by the friendship and alliance [which] I have made with King Antiochus [and] his descendants. If anyone [makes war on him], I shall fight as his ally, and I shall not abandon the alliance which I have made with King Antiochus in any way or on any pre<te>xt, provided King Antiochus also abides by the alliance. If I keep my oath, may my affairs prosper and the reverse if I forswear. (*Ilion* 45; Taslıklıoğlu/Frisch 1975; repub. with corrections by Ferrary/Gauthier 1981; Burstein 22)

To this we might compare Briant's discussions (1987a, 7) of how relations between the central power and local communities were structured in the Achaemenid period. What emerges is that in a general way relations between the central power and local bodies were regulated by contracts, or treaties, written or customary. This is clearly

also true for the Seleucid empire; cf., for example, the Judaean community of Jerusalem which received a royal charter from Antiochus III (see further below pp. 51-2). In the particular case quoted here, the king, either Antiochus I or II (not Antiochus III, cf. Ferrary/Gauthier 1981), made a reciprocal alliance allowing (in theory) the city a minimum of independence (fiscal and political autonomy, no royal garrison) in exchange for military aid and the use of harbour facilities for the Seleucid fleet. This 'autonomy' was infringed later, in the 250s, when a royal mint took over and replaced the independent issue of Lysimachus' tetradrachms.

Other military alliances with peoples treated apparently as independent, probably on the model of the Achaemenid empire, can be seen in the Seleucids' military use of, for example, Iranian tribes, notably the Sacae, and of the large Arabian camel corps under Zebdibelos in the reign of Antiochus III (see below p. 56). The presence of nomadic and transhumant pastoral peoples in the Seleucid armies is probably best explained, as in the Achaemenid empire, by their status (temporary or not) as military allies of the king, not 'subjects' like others – i.e. not tributary or under direct royal administration, but with military obligations to fulfil when the king needed them (see above pp. 17-18; Briant 1982a; Sherwin-White 1987; Fussman 1982; Thapar 1981).

It is a mistake to characterise (and derogate) the Seleucid kingdom as a mere patchwork of separate 'nations' or 'countries', instead of seeing it as an empire composed (at least in the main part) of separate imperial administrative districts (the satrapies), and with other areas under different forms of obligation to the king. The Seleucid empire was not the neat result of theoretical model-building. It inherited the realities of the multiform political structures of the Achaemenid empire; a diverse ecology and economy to contend with: no systematic uniformity of imperial control was historically, or geographically possible, then, or even in the twentieth century (cf. *CHI* I; Melville 1984; Bell 1907; Thesiger 1964).

These are the realities of the Seleucid empire. So how was it organised and structured internally? First, the exercise of royal control in areas under direct rule – the satrapal system and imperial apparatus. The Seleucids maintained a continuity with the Achaemenids (at least on the surface) by retaining the system of satrapies – large territorial provinces placed under the governorship of an official with the title satrap (in Greek texts *strategos* – general), who enjoyed vast responsibilities and power and, depending on loyalism, could work equally to unify (e.g. Zeuxis, in the reign of Antiochus III), or fragment the solidarity of the kingdom (Molon, also under Antiochus III) – much like Roman proconsuls in the Republic. As in the Achaemenid empire, there was no fixed career structure (*cursus honorum*); the king's favour

was what won (or lost) a position, the appointment in normal conditions being the king's. This dependence on royal approval for office-holding is paralleled by a probable practice of the Achaemenid kings who, like the earlier Assyrian rulers, formally reinvested (or not) officials with their titles on accession (D.S. XI 71,1; Josephus *AJ* XI 185; cf. Briant 1991, 9). Polybius (V 54) well attests Antiochus III's reshuffle of satraps after the revolt of his satrap of Media, Molon, and his direct appointment from proven Friends and army personnel of new satraps for Susiana, the satrapy of the Red Sea (Arab-Persian gulf) and for the satrapy of Media (222). Note also the description of Demetrius' (162-150) arrangements after his accession:

> The king chose Bacchides, one of the Royal Friends, who was governor beyond the Euphrates (i.e. governor of Syria), a man of high standing in the empire and loyal to the king. He sent him and the godless Alcimus, on whom he had conferred the high-priesthood, with orders to take vengeance on Israel. (I *Maccabees* 7.8-9)

Another such instance of royal elevation of a 'King's Friend' is the new Greek inscription from Pamukçu, near Balikasir in Mysia, dated to 209; it also illustrates nicely the chain of command from king to satrap and thence to local governor:

> (I) Philotas to Bithys, greeting. Enclosed is a copy of the letter for you written to us by Zeuxis about the decisions concerning Nicanor. Give orders to carry out the provisions as they are written. Farewell. (Year) 103, (month) Artemisius 20 (= 3 May 209).
>
> (II) Zeuxis to Philotas, greeting. If you are well, that would be good. We too are in good health. The order (*prostagma*) written to us by the king concerning Nicanor is attached for you below. You will act well giving orders that they should follow and carry out the commands, as he (sc. the king) thinks that things should be done. (Year) 103, (month) Artemisius 3 (= 16 April 209)
>
> (III) King Antiochus to Zeuxis, greeting. As Nicanor, the chamberlain, being among our Friends on account of ... ?our judging him a worthy and trusted person, and having been brought up with us, has given consistent demonstrations of his faithfulness (*pistis*) and goodwill (*eunoia*), we wished to release ... (him from?) in a manner worthy of what has been written above (about him) ... of the benefactions from us, not ... because of ... (we want) other things to be attributed to his care. We have (therefore) appointed him chief priest of the sanctuaries in the region beyond (i.e. north of) Taurus, as he himself requested, being convinced also because of his character (*ethos*) that he will carry out both the matters with regard to the sacrifices and the rest in a manner worthy of our zeal (*sponde*), which we have in regard to these matters, wishing to augment (these) as is appropriate. We thought it necessary for him to be in charge of the sanctuaries and that the revenues of these and the other

things be administered by him as they were also in the time of our grandfather (Antiochus II, 261-246) by Dion. Therefore give orders for collaboration with him in what is appropriate for what has been explained above. Mention him both in contracts and in the other legal documents for which it is usual. Also have a copy of the letter engraved on stelae of stone and set up in the most conspicuous sanctuaries. (Year) 102(? or 101?), (month) D[ys]trus, 23 (= 7 February 209 or 18 February 208). (H. Malay *EpAn* 10 (1987))

How many satrapies there were in any one period is unknown as yet. There is, for example, no evidence either to corroborate or disprove (let alone to date) Appian's statement that Seleucus I had seventy-two satrapies, over three times the number that the Achaemenids ever maintained. Tarn (1930; 1938, 2-4) tried to explain (and 'save') Appian by taking the eparchy (in fact, in Greco-Roman times, equivalent to the satrapy) as denoting the hyparchy of the Seleucid empire (i.e. regional subdivisions of the satrapy) assuming that much later evidence (centuries later) from the post-Seleucid empire of the Parthians on satrapal subdivisions actually revealed the Seleucid structures. Although Tarn's arguments are flawed and no longer accepted, and Appian's figure for the Seleucid empire wildly out (a manuscript mistake? or reflecting exaggerated views of the size of the Seleucid empire? cf. *Esther* 1:1 where the Persian king is described as master of seventy-two provinces (*medinah*)), there is good evidence under the Seleucids of some increase in the number of satrapies from the Achaemenid period. Whatever the motives (perhaps a tightening up of the administrative structure already latent in the late Achaemenid period: cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White in press), there was, therefore, a potential increase of effective direct rule. By the time of the accession of Antiochus III three new satrapies had been created in the Fertile Crescent alone – one in the region of the Middle Euphrates (Parapotamia) which was commanded by the Seleucid colony of Dura Europus, much as the kingdom of Mari had once dominated this area (cf. Dalley 1984), and another in southern Mesopotamia – the 'Districts of the Red Sea' (later probably the kingdom of Mesene/Characene), at the head of the Arab gulf, embracing the territory of the earlier 'Sealand' (cf. Dougherty 1932) and probably including also islands from Failaka (off modern Kuwait) to Bahrein (Salles 1987; Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985); finally, the area of the crucially important strategic and trading route up the Diyala valley linking Seleucia-Tigris (and thus Babylonia) to Media was formed into a separate satrapy by Antiochus III's reign (Schmitt 1964, 33ff.; 52ff.; 134ff.) called Apolloniatis (cf. the earlier Babylonian province of Tupliash, Kinnier Wilson 1962, 113-15; Adams 1965, 175 n. 2; for the importance of the area in Neo-Babylonian, Achaemenid and early hellenistic period cf. Durand/Joannès 1988; Beaulieu 1989b). Further

splitting of satrapies may be attested for Bactria-Sogdiana, which Strabo (rather vaguely) says constituted a number of satrapies; however, it seems more than likely that Strabo is speaking of the period following direct Seleucid rule, i.e. after 250 (cf. below Chapter 4).

The known divisions of the Seleucid empire in the third century are: in Asia Minor, Lydia, the Hellespontine satrapy (Hellespontine Phrygia), Greater Phrygia, Mysia, Lykaonia, Cilicia, to which roster Antiochus III's conquests added (for a short time) Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia; there was also Seleucid Cappadocia to *c.* 250; eastwards, Syria to which Antiochus III added Commagene, Phoenicia and Coele Syria (see Fig. 1) and Armenia (north). Then came Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Parapotamia, the Districts of the Red Sea and Apolloniatis (Polyb. V 48,16). Further east, Media, Susiana, Persis, Arachosia with Gedrosia (but see below p. 93), Parthia (to 230s), Hyrcania, Margiana, Aria, Carmania and Drangiana (Seistan), Bactria-Sogdiana – at most some twenty provinces. But the fact that provinces were subdivided and hence there were more than in the Achaemenid period is significant. Is it a sign of concern with expansion and exploitation of the area and so of its control? The sheer size of some satrapies is not always easy to evaluate (as, for example, a sign of laxness), since the vastness of some provinces can be explained by the fact that they contained areas of desert which formed sparsely inhabited zones.[1]

The satrapies were the vehicle for centralised government. In so far as they often constituted entire regions, e.g. Babylonia, Persis, Lydia, with ancient indigenous socio-political systems, the articulation of local government was correspondingly diverse. For example, whereas in Lydia before the hellenistic period, the main socio-political and economic unit of community was the village (*kome* in Greek), in Babylonia it was the many urban centres: ancient cities such as Babylon, Uruk, Kish and Sippar, to name a few.

Regional administrative subdivisions functioned within the satra-

[1] The names of some 19 'provinces' into which the area of Mesopotamia, i.e. Assyria and Babylonia, alone was divided in the Parthian period (the names typically end in –ena, –ia, –itis) are known: 1. Anthemusia/Batnae (area around modern Sarug); 2. Osrhoene (Edessa); 3. Chalcitis; 4. Gauzanitis (around Tell Halaf and the sources of the the Habur); 5. Inigene or Tinigene (on the lower course of Habur); 6. Akabene (area of upper Tigris); 7. Mygdonia (Nisibis area); 8. Zabdicene (north of Beth Zabda area); 9. Adiabene (Arbela area); 10. Athuria (area near Nineveh, between the Tigris and Zab rivers); 11. Chazene (a small place on the Tigris, exact location unknown); 12. Calachene (an area near Kalhu, mod. Nimrud); 13. Dolomene (in Assyria, cf. Strabo XVI 736); 14. Arrappachitis (area of Arraphe); 15. Chalonitis (area of Hulwan); 16. Apolloniatis (in Diyala valley); 17. Sittacene (area of the 'state' Sittace on the Tigris, probably identical with western Apolloniatis); 18. Mesene (region at the head of the Arabian-Persian gulf, probably identical with Characene); 19. Ancobaritis (cf. Ptolemy V 17,4: in mid-Mesene). Whether Tarn (1938) was right to suppose that a number of these names go back to the Seleucid period is unconfirmable; the evidence disproves the satrapal status of these places in the Seleucid period and, if any were administrative units, what 'level' they represented is also uncertain.

pies. How widespread and how uniform is unclear. In Anatolia they are called hyparchies in Greek terminology; in Babylonia *pīhātu*, ruled by a separate official. It is a pity that the stratigraphy of the satrapal administrative units is so lacking. What we can glimpse is that, where there is evidence, the Seleucids built upon and adapted the institutions of a past empire – thus, for example, in Babylonia, the *pīhātu*, administrative districts within a satrapy, originated from the earlier first millennium local system of government (Brinkman 1968, 296-304) and are attested in the Seleucid period, with an official named (lú)*pāhātu* in charge (*ABC* no. 13, obv. l.5, cf. Sherwin-White 1983a, 268; for the (lú)*pāhātu* of Babylon: Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –187 rev.9′); in Babylonia the (lú)*pā/īhātu*, as in Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid times is the boss of a subdivision, not a satrap (cf. Stolper 1990, 199-200).

What did the satraps do? Who were they? How were they chosen? It is partly (but not entirely) a function of the war orientation of the Greek and Roman literary sources, that the military role of satraps is most publicised. A more nuanced picture can be obtained from a Babylonian astronomical diary:

rev.
29′: That year (i.e. SE 38 = 274/3), the king left his (?troops *or* ?friends), his wife, and a high-ranking official in the land of Sardis to strengthen the guard. He went to (the province of) 'Beyond the River' (i.e. Syria) against the troops of Egypt
30′: which were encamped in 'Beyond the River', and the troops of Egypt withdrew before him. Month XII, the 24th day, the satrap of Babylonia brought out much silver, cloth, goods and utensils (?)
31′: from Babylon and Seleucia, the royal city, and 20 elephants, which the satrap of Bactria had sent to the king, to 'Beyond the River'
32′: before the king. That month, the general gathered the troops of the king, which were in Babylonia, from beginning to end, and went to the aid of the king in month I to 'Beyond the River'.
33′: That year, purchases in Babylon and the (other) cities were made with copper coins of Ionia. That year there was much *ekketu*-disease in the land.

34′: Year 37 (= 275/4), (kings) Antiochus and Seleucus, month XII, the 9th, the satrap of Babylonia and the appointees of the king, who had gone to the king to Sardis in year 36 (= 276/5),
35′: returned to Seleucia, the royal city which is on the Tigris. Their message (written on a) leather (scroll) came to the citizens of Babylon. The 12th day,
36′: the citizens of Babylon went out to Seleucia. That month, the satrap of Babylonia <...> the fields which had been given in year 32 (= 280/279) at the command of the king for sustenance of the people of Babylon,
37′: Nippur, and Cutha; bulls, sheep and everything of the [cities] and religious centres at the command of the king before the citizens

> 38′: [...] ... of 'the house of the king' (i.e. royal treasury/property) he made. That year, a large number of bricks for the reconstruction of Esa[ngila] were moulded above Babylon and below Babylon [...] (Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –273, pp. 344-7; cf. for discussion of some problematic terms, van der Spek 1986, 214-15; Renger 1985, 257-9)

Here the satrap of Bactria sends war elephants to the satrap of Babylonia for him to forward to the king at war in Syria, while the latter dispatches resources as requested by the king. Satraps could also levy local troops, and fight commanding provincial forces in wars, within and outside their satrapies (cf. revolt of Molon, Polyb. V 54; see below p. 189).

In the Achaemenid period another major function of the satrap was overall responsibility for collection of taxes (Dandamaev/Lukonin 1988, 101-3). In Seleucid Babylonia, the satrap's despatch of silver for the king in war may indicate a continuity here, as is also implied for the late fourth century by the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomicus* (cf. Rostovtzeff 1941: I, 440ff.), where the satrapal 'housekeeping' (*oikonomia*) consisted in the collection of taxes (*tele*) and tribute (*phoros*), listed in order of importance (i.e. size of income) and comprising: (1) tax on agricultural produce and land (tithe/*ekphorion*); (2) taxes on natural resources of a place – silver, gold, copper, salt (the latter important everywhere and probably gathered in Mesopotamia in a variety of ways by local groups, cf. Potts 1984); (3) taxes from commerce (*emporia*); (4) taxes from dues on land and markets; (5) taxes on agricultural animals; (6) taxes on individuals, viz. poll tax and taxes on craftsmen (*Oec.* II 10,4. 1345b; see below p. 68). However, there were some important limits to the fiscal authority of the satrap; for example, 'royal' land was administered by royal officials, responsible to the king. They are named, confusingly, like the satrapal financial administrators, *dioiketes* and *oikonomos*.

Who were the satraps? They were, as has already been said (see above pp. 42-4), chosen from among the king's friends and relations, by the king, on the basis of personal favour, service and power politics: the *eunoia* syndrome (cf. above p. 10; below pp. 132-3). Thus, the letter from Failaka shows a satrap perhaps currying favour by implementing royal policies neglected by his predecessor (see further below p. 174). The surviving royal letters may reflect the personal nature of this in so far as the king, using royal title, addresses satraps by personal name, not by title which does not appear in the formal greetings:

> King Antiochus to Meleager, greetings. We have given to Aristodicides of Assos 2,000 *plethra* of arable land, to be attached to the city of Ilium or of Scepsis. Do therefore give instructions to assign to Aristodicides from the land which borders on Gergis or Scepsis, wherever you decide, the 2,000

> *plethra* of land, and attach it to the city of Ilium or of Scepsis. Farewell. (*RC* 10; Austin 180 b)

The satraps were endowed with great landgrants, comprising sizeable areas with villages, to support their household and administration in a palatial style mirroring that of the king. Note, for example, that as satrap of Babylonia, Seleucus I's *oikos* included Friends and slaves (D.S. XIX 90,1); their wealth was proverbial. The Spartan king Agis IV (*c.* 262-241) tried to undermine the authority of his opponent and fellow king, Leonidas, who, as younger brother of Areus, had succeeded unexpectedly to the throne (*c.* 246) and had 'spent time' with Seleucus (i.e. Seleucus II before his accession), by attacking, stereotypically, Leonidas' supposed imitation of the luxurious, 'non-Greek', barbarian, royal, untraditional and very unspartan practices of satrapal courts:

> The servants and slaves of satraps and *epitropoi* of Ptolemy and Seleucus have more wealth than all the kings in Sparta together. (Plutarch *Agis* 7; cf. 3)

Hermias, the powerful man left by young Seleucus III in charge of affairs in Syria (i.e. as viceroy) during his fatal campaign in Asia Minor, had amassed enough wealth to end an army mutiny by paying off its arrears in wages. Endowed as they were with the resources for great wealth and military strength, satraps could exercise a formidable power: Antiochus III had Hermias summarily killed, a couple of years later. In spite of much emphasis on the fragmenting potential of this system, it is worth remembering that before the second century, loyalty to the king and to his legitimate successors (and the rewards of this) proved sufficiently strong to hold together a vast empire from Lydia, through to the Iranian plateau and beyond. Molon's disaffection can be balanced by Zeuxis' loyalty (cf. above p. 42; below p. 189).

Administration and bureaucracy

In 1934 the hellenistic historian Welles prophetically wrote (*RC*, p. 102) that 'the official correspondence of the Seleucid empire may have been comparable in volume to that of the Ptolemaic empire, if conditions had been favourable to its preservation'. It is becoming increasingly clear that the bureaucracy of the Seleucid kingdom was as complex and developed as that of Ptolemaic Egypt (Taylor 1983, 150-2; 170-1). One document that reveals the truth of Welles' prediction is an important inscription from Beth Shean (discovered in 1960), containing a dossier of five documents about the legal rights and immunity from billeting of villages near the town of Scythopolis, in

Palestine, belonging to the fief of Ptolemy, ex-Ptolemaic governor of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, who had deserted to Antiochus III during the king's conquest of the region:

> [Doc. A] King Antiochus to Ptolemaios, greetings [...]. Have the letters inscribed on stone stelae and set up in the villages belonging to you. We have written about this to Kleon and Heliodorus, the *dioiketai*, that they may obey it. Hyperberetaios 112 (= September, 200)
>
> [Doc. B] King Antiochus to Kleon, greetings. The written documents [...] for the *strategos* [...] [traces: ?the same (letter has been sent to) Heliodorus]
>
> [Doc. C] King Antiochus to Kleon, greetings. Copy of the memorandum, which Ptolemaios, the *strategos* and 'high priest' has submitted to us is attached. It shall be done as he requests. ... 111 (= 202/1).
>
> [Doc. D] To King Antiochus, memorandum of Ptolemaios, *strategos* and 'high priest', about disputes that may arise: I request that instructions be given so that those problems that may arise between the peasants of my villages be settled by my agents, while those problems that may arise with peasants from other villages be examined by the *oikonomos* and the headman of the place, (and) that if it is a case of murder or appears to be of some importance the matter be referred to the *strategos* of Syria and Phoenicia; (and) that the garrison-commanders and those in charge of the administration of the district should not ignore in any way those who request their intervention. The same (letter) to Heliodorus.
>
> [Doc. E] King Antiochus to Kleon, greetings. The other memorandum which Ptolemaios, the *strategos* and 'high priest' has submitted to us is attached. It shall be done as he requests. 4 Audnaios, 112 (= December 201).
>
> [Doc. F] To the Great King Antiochus, memorandum of Ptolemaios, *strategos* and 'high priest'. I request, if it please you, oh King, to write to Kleon and Heliodorus, the *dioiketai*, that no one has the right, either in the villages which belong to my domain, or in the (royal) property or in those (villages) that you have ordered to be registered, to billet himself for any reason or bring others there or requisition any property or take people away. The same to Heliodorus.
>
> [Doc. G] King Antiochus to Marsyas, greetings. Ptolemaios, the *strategos* and 'high priest' has informed us that several of (the troops) en route are billeting themselves in his villages and committing a number of other ills, thus ignoring our orders in this respect. So make it your business not only to prevent them, but also to have them punished tenfold for what they have done ... The same to Lysanias, Leon, Dionikos.
>
> [Doc. H] King Antiochus to Heliodorus, greetings. The copy of the letter which we have written to Marsyas is attached. So obey it. ... Xandikos 117 (March 195).

> [Doc. I] Attached is the one to Marsyas; to Theodotos (a copy) of the one to Lysanias; to Apollophanes the one to Leon; to Plutogenes the one to Dionikos. (Landau 1966; Fischer 1979; Bertrand 1982; Taylor 1983)

The inscription attests correspondence between the king, Ptolemy and the numerous Seleucid officials in the area (fiscal administrators: *dioiketai* with subordinate *oikonomoi*) and the military commanders in the region; the latter are under the direct authority of the king, *not* of the satrap, and each official gets copies of the king's orders. This separation of function may be attributed in this instance to the recent acquisition in war of this area.

Royal administration did not stop at the walls of the Greek *polis*. In Asia Minor, Sardis, and further east, both new Greek and non-Greek cities (Seleucia-Tigris; Laodicea-Mare; Seleucia-Pieria; Uruk) had royal governors (Greek and non-Greek) who received and were supposed to implement the king's policy, usually via the satraps (cf. above pp. 43-4), or on instructions direct from the king. The communities (Greek and non-Greek) were subject to taxation and royal fiscal administration unless granted exemptions (Seleucia-Tigris, Uruk cf. Rostovtzeff 1932; Doty 1977: 14-30; 308-35; Babylon cf. the text quoted above pp. 46-7, ll. 34′-38′).

The Seleucids' pragmatism and realism in government is reflected in their continuing use for local administration, in non-Greek areas, of some of the written languages in use in the Achaemenid empire – a fact which evidence, new and old, attests clearly and undeniably from the early third century (Sherwin-White 1987, 3-6; 24-5). The old view that Greek was the official language of the Seleucid empire (and all the implications for cultural imperialism that this carries) has to be abandoned as groundless. For official bilinguals we have from Iran in the Seleucid period the 'milestone' or distance marker from Pasargadae of the early third century (Lewis 1978; Bivar 1978) and from the mid-second century the victory dedication of the Seleucid viceroy of the 'Upper Satrapies' from Bisitun, with an incomplete Aramaic abstract (see below p. 223 and Plates 27 and 28). No Seleucid royal bilingual inscription has been found, though this may be merely chance – a supposition strengthened by the Mauryan Greek-Aramaic royal edict from Kandahar (quoted below p. 101), which shows clearly that 'imperial Aramaic' continued in use (cf. Briant 1984, 60). For an official royal inscription in a non-Greek language the cylinder foundation inscription in Akkadian of Antiochus I provides a vital attestation of Seleucid kingly ideology and practice (see further below pp. 130-2; text: above pp. 36-7, cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991).

In addition to the military and fiscal representatives of the central government in the satrapies, there seems to have been some royal intervention in local justice, though the evidence is sparse. Apparently

there was a system of 'royal judges' ((lú)*dayyāne*(meš) *ša šarri*) whose existence is attested in cuneiform texts for Seleucid Babylonia (*ABC* 13b, l. 9, cf. Sherwin-White 1983a, 269) as for the Achaemenid (and Neo-Babylonian) period, when they had authority to decide important cases. But their selection, scope of authority and functions (civil and criminal) are uncertain as, in consequence, is their relation to local bodies with judicial authority, such as the dikasts of Greek cities under Seleucid rule and the local Babylonian assemblies or councils (e.g. at Babylon and Uruk; cf. van der Spek 1987). We know nothing about local jurisdiction in new Seleucid foundations in the Greek east, e.g. in Syria, Babylonia and further east. In a Parthian period document from Dura Europus, a royal court and royal judges could go back to Seleucid institutions (Bickerman 1938, 207); royal (centralised) institutions for local jurisdiction *may* have been more widespread than is at present attested (cf. *RTP* 22-3, 211).

Relations between the centre and the constituent elements

The royal administration bore down directly on the 'subjects' through the king and his representative officials (the satrapal system). It is important, however, to remember that as places originally came under Seleucid rule and probably again at accessions, individual autonomous communities negotiated agreements with the king regulating political status, fiscal obligations and such matters as military aid and garrisons (e.g. Aradus, cf. Strabo XVI 2,14; Polyb. V 68,7). This is amply attested not only for the Greek cities of Asia Minor, but also for the hellenised 'temple states' of Anatolia and for Carian towns. Further east too, we can now recognise that the Seleucids, like Achaemenid, Neo-Babylonian and Assyrian kings before them, regulated their relations with individual towns and *ethne* (peoples) of their empire by the formulation and grant of what can be called 'charters' granted unilaterally by the king, who had, however, to acknowledge local traditions and traditional privileges. A good example is the charter of Antiochus III granted to Jerusalem after the fifth Syrian war (202-200):

> 'King Antiochus to Ptolemy, greetings. Since the Jews, when we entered their country, at once displayed their enthusiasm for us, and when we arrived at their city received us magnificently and came to meet us with their senate, and have provided abundant supplies to our soldiers and elephants, and assisted us in expelling the Egyptian garrison in the citadel, we thought it right on our part to repay them for these services and to restore their city which had been destroyed by the accidents of war, and to repeople it by bringing to it those who have been scattered abroad. In the first place we have decided because of their piety to provide them with an allowance for sacrifices consisting of sacrificial animals, wine, olive oil and frankincense, to the value of 20,000 silver

pieces, and sacred artabas of finest flour in accordance with their ancestral law, and 1,460 medimni of wheat, and 375 medimni of salt. I wish these grants to be made to them in accordance with my instructions, and the work on the temple to be completed together with the stoas and anything else which needs to be built. The timber required for the woodwork shall be brought from Judaea itself, from the other nations and from Lebanon, and no one shall charge any duty on it. Similarly for the other materials needed for repairing the temple in a more splendid way. All the people of the nation shall govern themselves in accordance with their ancestral laws, and the senate, the priests, the scribes of the temple and the temple-singers shall be exempted from the poll-tax, the crown-tax and the salt-tax. To hasten the repeopling of the city, I grant to the present inhabitants and to those who come back before the month Hyperberetaeus freedom from taxes for three years. We also remit for the future one third of their taxes to make good the injuries they have sustained. As for all those who were carried away from their city and are now slaves, I grant their freedom to them and to their children, and order the restoration of their property to them.'

Such was the content of the letter. And out of respect for the temple he issued a proclamation throughout the whole kingdom in the following terms: 'No foreigner shall be allowed to enter the precinct of the temple which is forbidden to the Jews, except for those who are accustomed to doing so after purifying themselves in accordance with ancestral custom. Nor shall anyone bring into the city the flesh of horses, mules, wild or tame asses, leopards, foxes, and hares, and generally of any of the animals forbidden to the Jews. Nor is it allowed to bring in their skins, nor even to rear any of these animals in the city. Only the sacrificial animals used by their ancestors, necessary for a propitious sacrifice to god, shall they be allowed to use. Whoever transgresses any of these rules shall pay to the priests a fine of 3,000 drachmas of silver.' (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XII 138-46; Austin 167)

Antiochus III's charter for the Judaean *ethnos* on his conquest of Palestine was not unique (cf. the earlier decree of Cyrus for the refoundation of Jerusalem, *Ezra* 1); ancient Babylonian towns – e.g. Babylon, Nippur, Sippar – had jealously guarded traditions of privileged status, such as exemptions from corvée and certain taxes (cf. Lambert 1960; Reiner 1983), and negotiations with new conquerors and appeals to kings based on such 'charters' are well attested (cf. Kuhrt 1988b; 1990a). In the case of hellenistic Babylon, Seleucus' charter may be referred to by Pausanias I 16,3 (Sherwin-White 1987, 25-6). Notoriously, kings could renege, as Antiochus IV did with the Jews (see below pp. 226-8), but politically such a step was to be avoided. It is wrong to suppose that the relationship of king to constituent elements was completely arbitrary, despotic and unbound by sanctions. In the case of rebellion, as at Seleucia-Tigris and Sardis under Antiochus III, the king imposed the terms, which could be modified by negotiation, of reprisals, indemnity and royal aid for reparation and rehabilitation.

The Seleucid war machine

When he was firmly established on the throne, Antiochus made up his mind to become king of Egypt and so to rule over both kingdoms. He assembled a powerful force of chariots, elephants and cavalry, and a great fleet, and invaded Egypt. When battle was joined, Ptolemy, king of Egypt, was seized with panic and took to flight, leaving many dead. The fortified towns were captured and the land pillaged. (I *Maccabees* 1.16-19)

No source (other than Polybius) is richer than I *Maccabees* for perceptions of the Seleucid monarchy as a great and frightening military power with almost endless reserves of manpower, huge regiments of cavalry, backed up by the dirty tricks brigade of the eastern empires' scythed chariotry, and ferocious, intoxicated war elephants terrifyingly deployed. Kings regarded conquest as their job, replied to armed opposition with rage and the dispatch of armies, taking personal command of military campaigns which were viewed as central. To a degree, this is not just Maccabean hype but a true and vivid picture of Seleucid power, of the military emphasis of the monarchy (like past empires and, indeed, any empire) and the ultimate reliance upon force. Polybius' account of Antiochus III's reign gives a similar impression. Also, conquest, military glory and the quest for booty was ideologically pressed upon the kings by Babylonian and Achaemenid traditions, and by current political and economic imperatives (cf. Austin 1986; Bar Kochva 1976).

Despite the occasional loss of territory, the Seleucids inherited most of the enormous advantages of the Achaemenid empire – large resources in tribute, manpower and cavalry. The explanations of the Seleucids' justly noted ability to maintain their military manpower are several: first, their continued grasp till 188 of a vast empire from Anatolia to the Iranian plateau (modern Iran, alone, comprises 1,648,000 km^2, or 628,000 square miles) and beyond with great manpower resources; secondly, their use, on the Achaemenid pattern, of non-Greeks and non-Greek allies in great numbers in their armies; and finally, to these were added Greek and Macedonian colonists. The Seleucids' supposed reluctance to arm and use some of the great strengths of the Achaemenid armies, especially the Persian and Babylonian cavalry, the archers and footsoldiery of Persia, is a modern invention; it is part and parcel of the view that Iran is somehow peripheral to Seleucid imperial strategies. This is a myth that is now in the process of being demolished. All the evidence points in the opposite direction (cf. Fig. 2). Thus Diodorus XVIII-XX attests the composition of the armies of the Successors, including that of Seleucus, in the wars in the middle east, where the reserves, *especially* of Persian manpower

	Phalanx	Semi-heavy infantry	Light infantry	Heavy cavalry	Light cavalry	Total
Battle of Raphia (217 B.C.)	20,000 Macedonians 10,000 *argyraspides* 5,000 Greeks	1,000 Thracians	1,500 Cretan archers 1,000 Neo-Cretan archers 500 Lydian akontists 10,000 Arabs 1,000 Cardacians 5,000 Dahae and Cilicians 2,000 Persian and 'Agrianian' bowmen and slingers 5,000 Medes, Cissians, Cadusians and Carmanians	4,000 military settlers 2,000 Royal Guard		
Total	35,000	1,000	26,000	6,000		68,000
Battle of Magnesia (190 B.C.)	16,000 Macedonians 10,000 *argyraspides*	3,000 Tralli(?) 3,000 Thracians 2,000 Cappadocians 3,000 Galatians 4,000 Pisidians, Pamphylians and Lycians(?)	3,000 Tralli(?) 1,500 Cretan archers 1,000 Neo-Cretan archers 2,500 Mysian archers 8,000 Elymaean archers and Cyrtian slingers 2,700 'Orientals' 1,500 Carians and Cilicians 4,000 Pisidians, Pamphylians and Lycians 1,000 elephant guard	6,000 cataphracts 2,000 Royal Guard	1,200 Dahaeans (Scythians) 2,500 Galatians 500 'Tarentines' (mounted archers)	
Total	26,000	8,000–15,000	18,200–25,200	8,000	4,200	71,400
The Daphne procession (165 B.C.)	15,000 Macedonians 5,000 *argyraspides*	5,000 'Roman style' 3,000 Thracians 5,000 Mysians(?) 5,000 Galatians	3,000 Cilicians 5,000 Mysian (archers?)	1,500 cataphracts 1,000 Nisaeans 2,000 Royal Guard		
Total	20,000	13,000–18,000	3,000–8,000	4,500		45,500

Fig. 2. Sources of manpower for the Seleucid armies (after Bar Kochva 1989).

(from Persis), were heavily tapped for archers and infantry. In Antiochus III's armies, Iranian and other eastern troops were present in large numbers for the battles at Raphia and Magnesia – cavalry, horse-archers and footsoldiers. There is no suggestion in Polybius that this is abnormal or innovatory; and, given the odd references between the time of Seleucus I and Antiochus III to the presence in Seleucid armies of non-Greek, and specifically Persian, infantry, it clearly was not. It therefore seems preferable to take Antiochus III's battle-lines at Raphia and Magnesia as representing the *typical* composition of a Seleucid army when a *general* mobilisation through the empire was ordered, which was needed – as under the Achaemenids – only for major campaigns. In other words, the Seleucids did not 'just' use light-armed Iranian troops (such as Molon's Cyrtians) but drew on the full range of armed forces. As Briant (1984, 65) noted in a different context, only when a general mobilisation was necessary (e.g. Darius III after, not before, Issos) were Babylonian, Scythian and Indian troops to assemble (at Babylon: Q.C. III 2,9; IV 9,2). Similarly, in localised campaigns in Anatolia we would not expect the presence of more distant contingents in a Seleucid army and their absence is not significant. Further we know, from Seleucid period sources, of Persian detachments in the phalanx (with *kleroi*) and of their temporary use for garrison duty (*OGIS* 229; Austin 182), as well as the use of Babylonian Jews as (military) colonists:

> King Antiochus to Zeuxis, 'his father', greetings. If you are in good health, it is well; I too am in good health. On hearing that the people in Lydia and Phrygia are in revolt, I thought this required great attention on my part, and after discussing with my Friends what ought to be done, I resolved to move 2,000 Jewish families with their chattels from Mesopotamia and Babylonia to the strongholds and the most strategic places. For I am convinced that they will be loyal guardians of our interests because of their piety to god, and I know that my ancestors have given witness to their loyalty and eagerness for what they are asked to do. I wish therefore to transfer them, although this is a laborious task, with the promise that they shall use their own laws. When you have brought them to the places I have mentioned, you will give them each a place to build a house and a plot of land to cultivate and plant vines, and you will grant them exemption from taxes on agricultural produce for ten years. Until such time as they obtain produce from the soil, corn shall be measured out to them to feed their servants. To those who perform services(?) shall be provided everything they need, so that by receiving this favour from us they might show themselves more devoted to our interests. Show concern for their people as much as possible, so that it may not be troubled by anyone. (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XII, 148-53; Austin 167)

The presence in the early Parthian period of hellenised Iranian cleruchs at Susa (*SEG* VII, 13) and in Media (Avroman, Minns 1915)

may be thought, with some justification, to go back to Seleucid military colonies which included Iranians (cf. Griffith 1968, ch. 6). It has in fact long been recognised that the cavalry power of the hellenistic kingdom of Bactria (Polyb. X 49,6-9) was drawn from (indigenous) Bactrian *hippeis*, whose status under the Achaemenids as a land-owning aristocracy with *oikoi* and land (not peasant cultivators) has been elucidated by Briant (1984, 83-4). This resource of military power (for the wealth of Bactria cf. Q.C. VII 4,30; VIII 26,31) was available for the Seleucids to draw upon while Bactria remained under Seleucid rule. Until more is known about Achaemenid military colonies (from Anatolia, through the Fertile Crescent to Bactria), about the story of their treatment by the Successors and their utilisation in the Seleucid period, this other potentially important source of manpower remains obscure. The continuation in the hellenistic period of military land-holdings in Babylonia is attested, for example at Uruk (cf. van der Spek 1986, 104-9). These were grants of land in return for which specified military service, such as that of archer or cavalry-soldier, though not necessarily personal, was obligatory (cf. Ebeling 1952). It was presumably the continued presence of such grant-holders that allowed Seleucus I to raise a cavalry in Babylonia (cf. D.S. XIX 91,5). The survival of similar Achaemenid period military settlements is also attested for Asia Minor by Greek inscriptions (Robert 1962; cf. Sekunda 1988; 1991). The importance of the eastern satrapies as a military reservoir is well-illustrated by the continued importance of Susa for mobilising and gathering contingents from the Upper Satrapies (D.S. XIX 21,1 cf. 14,6-8), which is now also attested as having a general located there (Sachs/Hunger 1989: no. –183); in this, Susa functioned alongside Seleucia-Tigris (see above p. 46, l. 32). Antiochus III was also able to utilise in the struggle for Palestine, a solid (10,000-strong) camel corps, under an Arab commander, useful for the desert terrain of the fourth and fifth Syrian wars, although exactly how they might have been deployed is a problem: Livy's (XXXVII 40,12) description of their ludicrously long swords (4 cubits = *c.* 2 plus metres long) makes their use as effective camel-mounted soldiers hard to credit (*pace* Bulliet 1975, 95; but cf. Appian *Syr.* 32 where the swords are much shorter). However the Arab troops were used, what is interesting is that the contingent shows the successful links forged between the Seleucids and those Arabs in control of the northern termini of the rich south Arabian trade, so that the Seleucid king could draw on their manpower as well as exploiting their expertise in tracking through desert, as had been done by earlier Assyrian and Achaemenid rulers (for Esarhaddon, cf. Borger 1956, §76: Fr. F rev. 2; for Cambyses, cf. Hdt. III 4,3-9,4)

Against hellenistic landforces Seleucid armies could and did prevail; it was the Roman legionary armies and new method of fighting that

defeated Seleucid, as other hellenistic, armies (for Antiochus III's successes, see below pp. 197-202). The continuing reproduction of military manpower is not explicable by the pursuit of continuous expansion resulting in access to new resources, as the empire shrank rather than grew after the first decades. How then is this maintenance of manpower to be explained? The sheer size of the Seleucid empire, still very large even by the reign of Antiochus IV in spite of losses, has probably much to do with it. A further factor was the military obligations of subjects, vassals and allies, enforceable and enforced by threat and/or show of force (cf. Antiochus III, see below pp. 190;198). The evidence clearly shows that the *norm* was obligations of military service in the satrapies. In addition, it is clear from our ancient evidence that the notion that the Greek cities and the new foundations in the east had no military obligations is wrong (cf. Sherwin-White 1980): thus Larisa in Syria traditionally supplied cavalry to the Seleucid kings in accordance with an agreement (*symmachia*, cf. D.S. XXXIII 4a) struck with Seleucus I. In the Parthian wars of Antiochus VII over control of the Fertile Crescent, which were therefore crucial for the survival of the Seleucid empire, we are told by Posidonius (ap. D.S. XXXIV 17) that 'No home in (Syrian) Antioch escaped the loss of sons' (a passage very inconvenient for those who take Posidonius' caricaturing and stereotypical picture of the soft 'Syrian' Greeks overseriously, and reflecting the continued Achaemenid practice of compelling every family-head to supply their sons for army-service when required). Often it may have been left, in the immediacy of crisis, to local communities to organise locally opposition to the danger of military attack (as Priene did, with success, against the Galatians, above pp. 33-4) and deal with problems as they arose. And it is wrong to suppose that 'military colonists' were not on active military service – the long inscription dealing with relations between Seleucid military detachments and garrisons in the field and the local commander at Magnesia-Sipylos and Smyrna demonstrates that the men were on *active* military service and had (and thus were supported by) their *kleroi*, probably worked therefore by local inhabitants (*OGIS* 229; Austin, 182; for the Achaemenid period cf. Hdt. V 102; Xen. *Anab*. VII 8). These *kleroi* were in law hereditary, as shown by a parchment from Dura Europus (Welles 1959, 76-9 (no. 12); Austin 179). In trying to explain how the Seleucids kept up their army numbers, the evidence strongly suggests that non-Greeks in the empire were trained in the Macedonian method of warfare, so that they could fight in the phalanx, on the pattern of Alexander (Arrian VII 6,1; cf. Briant 1987b, 103-4; Bosworth 1988, 272-3) and, of course, Philip II of Macedon. Statistical evidence, and proportions, are unfortunately completely lacking. But there is no basis for the widespread assumption that the Seleucid armies of the third century relied exclusively (or even mainly) on Macedonian/Greek soldiery (see below pp. 212-14).

Dissent and open mutiny are well attested in the Seleucid armed forces, from Seleucus I in his last campaign onwards (*ABC* 12, rev. 4); the causes are not always completely described, but where they are pinpointed are, unsurprisingly, failure to pay soldiers' wages (e.g. in 222, Antiochus III, cf. below pp. 188-9; in 164, Antiochus IV). These failures, with their own various explanations, did not cause permanent damage any more than failure to pay Roman armies stopped Roman imperial expansion (Harris 1979, 68ff., 93ff.). The prevailing attitude was one of loyalty to king and dynasty, which probably was not ordinarily questioned very much by the majority of subjects. This attitude, strikingly shown by the reluctance of troops in armies of usurpers (such as Achaeus and Molon) to face the king and break oaths, was actively reinforced by royal strategies and propaganda (cf. Sherwin-White 1987). Quite apart from the charismatic impact of the king's personal command of armies in war, the soldiers were bound by an oath of loyalty sworn by the *tyche* (fortune) of the king (*OGIS* 229; Austin 182). This was not, so far as we know, an old Macedonian custom. It may represent ultimately another link with Mesopotamian institutions where, in the Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods, loyalty oaths were sworn to the king by the gods (Parpola 1987; Parpola/Watanabe 1988). Of course the soldiers had booty to long for and fortunes to make too (cf. I *Maccabees* 1.35). We should perhaps not forget that the king (or his viceroys) controlled the appointment of military commanders for campaigns chosen from 'Friends' and trusted officials (above p. 43), so that commanders owed their careers to the king's gift (cf. also Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –273, obv. 11: 'That month, the deputy general, whom the king had appointed in Babylonia, entered Babylon'). This, coupled with the absence of any formal hierarchy of career, and the personal nature of the command 'system', by which commanders and the detachments under them were labelled and identified by the commander's personal name, probably signals a reality important for promoting military solidarity and was one of the traditional virtues of Macedonian army command, which favoured a close relationship of a relatively informal character between army bosses and the men. This is in stark contrast to the formality of the officer hierarchy of the Roman, as well as modern British, European and American armies, although recently they have begun to appreciate the advantages of closer personal relationships between commanding officers and their men.

The impact of the army on territories newly subjugated, or in the process of being conquered, was horrendous and brutal, as any perusal of I and II *Maccabees*, or the Greek inscriptions from Carian towns captured by Antiochus III (Labraunda, Kildara, Amyzon) reveals – pillage, destruction, mass enslavement were the norms of war. Thanks to the new Greek inscriptions from Amyzon we now have a much

clearer picture of the character of Antiochus III's 'acquisition' of Caria in 198. It was achieved by forceful military operations inflicting dire results on the local population. The enormous problem of keeping troops under control vis-à-vis the local populations, whether in billeting or in campaigns, and of curbing looting of sanctuaries and violence against them, is only too clear from the growing documentation of royal officials' orders prohibiting and trying to redress violations and dealing with the aftermath (cf. the Scythopolis inscription, above pp. 49-50, and the inscription from Failaka, below p. 174). It is also evident from the honours voted to local people who had expended time and money to help restore their cities after war:

> ... he continues doing great services for the people and, when the *hieroi douloi* ('sacred slaves') were captured in the war he went on an embassy to King Antiochus at his own expense and brought back the slaves, and in the other matters in which the People had need of him in every instance he continued to be zealous. He is to be given perquisites (*gera*) from the sacrifices made at public expense; the same privileges to belong to his offspring. The *neopoies* in office and Arieramnes, the *neokoros*, is to see to the inscription of the decree on the *parastas* of the temple pylon. (*Amyzon* 18, ll.3ff.)

The king, his Friends and the military forces ultimately controlled the empire; the force of the army was deployed as and when (and usually after) trouble broke out (see Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* XII 148-53, quoted above p. 55). Besides the army, military control was supported by the widespread use of guard posts (*stathmoi*) and fortified garrisons to oversee strategically important places in satrapies, along important routes (e.g. Dura Europus) and at cross-roads, and, flexibly, after revolt (e.g. Antiochus III in Lydia) when men of military age were 'injected' into an area of unrest as an occupying force. Military zones (*phylake*) are attested, i.e. areas under military control, such as in Caria near Eriza, in the crucially important region around Kermanshah (on the main road from Seleucia-Tigris to Media/Ecbatana) and on the frontiers against Media Atropatene, where, at the Karafto caves, the hellenistic archaeological remains have been identified by Bernard (1980a) as a Seleucid garrison (see below, p. 77). There was also another garrison at Avroman right on the border with Media Atropatene (Bernard 1980a). These separate pieces of evidence allow us to flesh out Polybius' statement that the Seleucids ringed Media with settlements as a 'guard against the barbarians' (Polyb. X 27,3).

'Temple-states'

'Temple-states' were treated as political, territorial entities, like other units, cities and kingdoms. But there are serious problems with categorising satisfactorily some of the non-Greek communities, often

loosely described as 'temple-states' – they can include places such as Comana, Hierapolis Bambyke, Jerusalem and Baetocaece as well as Uruk and Babylon. Generally the term is meant to describe sacred communities in the sense of places where no civic institutions independent of the cult organisation exist (a situation not of course true of the old Babylonian cities, cf. van der Spek 1987; Kuhrt 1990b), and where normally in this period they are under the virtually autocratic rule of a hereditary priesthood (Rostovtzeff 1941, 506; Debord 1982). Certainly some of the sanctuaries in east Anatolia (Cappadocia) continued through the hellenistic period to be independent of kings.

The 'temple-state' hypothesis or 'temple-dominated city model' derives from Assyriology (cf. Kuhrt 1990b, 119-26) and was first used to typify the organisation of Sumerian society and economy and then extended to apply to Babylonian cities in the first millennium. The basic criteria adduced were the assumed monopoly of ownership by the temples of all, or at least most of the land and therefore of the economic base, and hence the prime importance of temple staff and dependent labour. What few classical historians are aware of are the serious criticisms of this model, and the substantial modifications to this theory, both as an explanation of the dynamics of 'temple economy' and as a description of landownership. What has become clear is that private land co-existed with temple land (Diakonoff 1959/1974) and, above all, the documentary basis for the original theory has been demolished. It can now be shown that the theory rested on misidentification of a royal archive as a temple archive, on misunderstanding of the terminology (Gelb 1969; Foster 1981), and, finally, it has been established that the archive does not come from a temple (Tunca 1986). So both for the early and later periods, the temple-state hypothesis is now found to be an oversimplified and unhelpful reconstruction of Mesopotamian economy and society, inapplicable also to Babylonian towns in the hellenistic period (*pace* Aymard 1938; a complicated variant is presented by Sarkisian 1969). How far this now rather flawed model might be applicable to the so-called Anatolian 'temple-states', from which no archives for control exist, is uncertain.

There is, further, a great dispute among hellenistic historians over the nature of the impact of the Macedonian conquest, especially Seleucid rule, on such centres and their treatment. It is obviously mistaken to look for a global or uniform solution. A general impression is that there were some changes as well as continuities. One specific difference from the Greek societal institutions is the status of inhabitants named '*hierodouloi*' – 'slaves of the sanctuary' (*not* 'slaves of the god'), in other words people dedicated to the service of the god. The status was hereditary and the group subordinate to the god's

temporal representative, the high priest whose position was inalienable. Nevertheless the *hierodouloi* could have privileges, such as fiscal immunities from tax, tithes and corvée.

These places were treated as autonomous units by kings: kings correspond with high priests and subject (or not) these places to taxation, like the rest of the empire – thus a row between Apollonia, a new Greek *polis* and sacred *komai* (villages) over whether tribute (*phoros*) was to be paid to the king or to the city was heard by a crown official, the *eklogistes*, at Sardis (J. and L. Robert 1954, 166; Austin 187); the decision was that it was to be paid to the city. Tensions between the civic and theocratic structures in Caria are also attested between the city of Mylasa and the high-priest of the nearby sanctuary of Labraunda with regard to the fiscal status of the inhabitants and, therefore, control of revenue from sacred land. Seleucus II wrote to his official, Olympichus, about the complaint by the High-Priest Korris there that Mylasa had usurped some 'sacred land'; in response to this:

> We (i.e. Seleucus II) decree that the agreement made with Korris by virtue of ancestral privileges shall remain in this and all other matters. (*Labraunda* III/1 no. 1)

In the case of a sanctuary in Syria, king Antiochus gave the village of Baetocaece, which had been part of an estate, to the local god as revenue to be used for monthly sacrifices and the benefit of the temple by the priest (see below, p. 65). At the same time he granted *asylia* (inviolability) to the temple, as well as allowing duty-free fairs to be held twice a month, while the village itself was to be immune from billeting.

Royal intervention with regard to fiscal status, which could help sanctuaries (as in the case of Baetocaece above), by the restoration or grant of, for example, villages to the god, by grants of *asylia* and permanent or temporary immunities, continued under the Seleucids; there was no monolithic 'policy' of change (*pace* Tarn/Griffiths 1952, 126-7). There were changes, which we can glimpse, but they were not the result of a concerted policy of the kings, but part of the general interaction between communities, sacred and secular, with the king as arbiter. At the same time places such as Hierapolis, a *polis* to the Greek world, and Jerusalem, of course continued to exist as before. These centres were liable to royal taxation, which the king had a right to impose, and conversely to benefit from royal gifts of land or money.

Communications

Communicating across the empire could have been no speedier in the Seleucid empire than in the Achaemenid period since no technical advances occurred, any more than in the remainder of antiquity:

Antiochus III's edict issued on 18 March 193 was engraved on stone in Phrygia on 6 May and in north-west Iran on 26 June of the same year – the gap between receipt and process of presentation and publication has to be allowed for; all things considered, this is impressive by comparison with the slowness of modern, technologically equipped bureaucracies.

There are scrappy bits of evidence which give some hints that the Seleucids, at least in the third century, made efforts to maintain the Achaemenid road network: there are, for example, references to Seleucid *bematists* (Pliny *NH* VI 63) in the reign of Seleucus I mapping routes in the Upper Satrapies; there is the bilingual 'mile-marker' from Pasargadae of the early third century (Lewis 1978; Bivar 1978); and, finally, the ability geographically to position a place, to map it, within the empire is shown by the sundial found at the hellenistic site of Ai Khanoum (Bernard 1976, 299-302 and fig. 10; 1982c). Furthermore, the stopping-points (like service-stations on motorways) on the old Achaemenid royal route between Ephesus, Babylon, Bactria are echoed in the *Mansiones Parthicae* of Isidore of Charax. It has also been suggested (Tarn 1938) that in the east the late *Tabula Peuteringiana* preserves intelligence about routes from a Seleucid survey (cf. Potts 1989).[2]

It is as mistaken to view the Seleucid empire as only a land-empire as it is to view that of the Achaemenids in the same perspective. Naval warfare may mostly have been of secondary importance and tends certainly to be seen as such. But, from Seleucus I's opposition to Ptolemy, via Antiochus I's war against Antigonus II, to Antiochus III it was always to remain crucial to the Seleucids' claims to their Thracian inheritance from Lysimachus on. It was also important for 'control' of Syria, the Fertile Crescent and the Arab-Persian gulf (Salles 1987). It is no accident that the Seleucids took Aradus, with its useful navy, into alliance and developed Laodicea (modern Latakiya) as a major naval base (cf. Seyrig 1968, 61-2). The importance of the Seleucid navy is clearly shown by the severe restrictions imposed on it by Rome at the Peace of Apamea (188):

> He (Antiochus III) shall surrender his ships of war, their tackle and fittings, and in future shall not have more than ten undecked vessels, [and of these] none shall be driven [by more] than 30 oars and not these for the purposes of a war started by himself. He shall not sail to this side (i.e. west) of the river Calycadnus <and> the promontory <of Sarpedon>, except for the purpose of bringing tribute, ambassadors or hostages. (Polyb. XXI 42, 13-14)

[2] Note also that a Persian unit of distance-marking (*schoenos*, being the equivalent to the parasang) survived into the early imperial period in Asia Minor, cf. Mitchell 1976, 121-2.

Coinage

There is no reason to disbelieve Pseudo-Aristotle's statement that decision of weight standard and volume of minting was a royal prerogative, at least in the case of minting silver and gold coins on which there was a royal monopoly in areas under direct rule; bronze denominations, local communities from Babylon to Sardis were free to mint; in fact, minting tetradrachms was the symbol and exercise of privilege (Seyrig 1951b).

> King Antiochus to Simon, High Priest and Ethnarch, and to the Jewish nation, greeting.
>
> Whereas certain traitors have seized my ancestral kingdom, I have now decided to assert my claim to it, so that I may restore it to its former condition. I have raised a large body of mercenaries and fitted out ships of war. I intend to land in my country and to attack those who have ravaged my kingdom and destroyed many of its cities. Now therefore, I confirm all tax remissions which my predecessors granted you, and all their other remissions of tribute. I permit you to mint your own coinage as currency for your country. Jerusalem and the temple shall be free. All the arms you have prepared, and the fortifications which you have built and now hold, shall remain yours. All debts now owing to the royal treasury and all future liabilities thereto shall be cancelled from this time for ever. When we have re-established our kingdom, we shall confer the highest honours upon you, your nation and temple, to make your country's greatness apparent to the whole world. (I *Maccabees* 15.2-9)

The Seleucids possessed the raw material for coins in silver mines (Cilicia) and gold mines (Bactria) within their empire, but little is known about their reliance on and exploitation of these resources (or of their other metal sources). Their use of their own supplies of bullion for minting is probable (cf. Sachs/Hunger 1988: no. –273, l.30′ above p. 46). The incidence and volume of minting is linked closely with the number of military campaigns (see *ESM*, *WSM* for Antiochus I in Bactria, Antiochus II in Asia Minor, Seleucus III and Antiochus IV). Fine, pure, up to weight and beautiful coins were normally issued to pay for the army, bureaucracy and other expenditure; monetary income was derived also from taxes and tribute (see Plate 29).

Unlike the Ptolemies (and, later, the Attalids), the Seleucids never imposed what is usually called a 'closed monetary system' in their empire; unlike Ptolemaic Egypt, it is evident from the coin hoards that silver (and bronze) coinage of other cities and kingdoms circulated widely through the kingdom. The usual assumption is that no 'monopoly' or ban on the circulation of silver and gold from other states was imposed. The Seleucids continued Alexander's use of the Attic standard and, *de facto*, allowed coins of this standard (and others) to

circulate freely in the empire (cf. also the analogous Achaemenid practice, Carradice 1987).

The Ptolemaic strategy was established apparently to exploit a monopoly as a source of revenue for the state and because of a lack of supplies. The Seleucids chose not to follow suit; not (*pace* Mørkholm 1984) because theirs was a less centralised state without the bureaucratic control over economic life to make this possible. The administrative machinery, such as customs posts, existed. The reasons must remain speculative. It is possible that normally there were enough bullion resources in the Seleucid empire; also, royal coinage was bound to have a preferential position – as indeed Babylonian documents requiring payment in the equivalent of royal Seleucid coins imply, though at the same time attesting the continuing use of local Babylonian shekels; e.g.:

> Ina-qibit-Anu, son of Nana-iddin, son of Nidintu-Anu, descendant of Kidin-Marduk, [of his own free will], sold 1/12 in each day from one-half [on the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th], 8th (and) 9th: a total of 1/12 of a day on those days, his butcher's allotment, before Anu, Antu, Ishtar, Nanâ, Belet-ša-Reš and the gods of [their temple], monthly throughout the year, the *guqqû* and the *eššešu* offerings, and everything else which pertains to that butcher's allotment which is with all the owners [of their shares], for 16 shekels of silver, staters of Antiochus in good condition, for the full purchase price, to Labaši, son of Anu-zer-iddin, descendant of Ekur-zakir, forever ... (NCBT 1965 = Doty 1977, 200-1)

Thirdly, there is the slightly dubious argument that the 'balance of trade' seemed to be favourable in so far as a great many foreign coins are found in Syria and Babylonia (Thompson/Mørkholm/Kraay 1973).

It is a Eurocentric fallacy to suppose that the Macedonian conquest introduced coinage to the 'ancient east'. Apart from Achaemenid (to say nothing of Lydian) coinage, major areas had used money for centuries – multiples and fractions of Babylonian shekels which functioned like coins (cf. Powell 1978) and the punch-marked coins which in ancient India preceded the hellenistic Mauryan dynasty coins by a couple of centuries (Thapar 1961). It is, however, true that Alexander and the Seleucids established mints producing coins, small and large, through the empire, founded new local mints and by doing so, in a literal sense, increased in some areas the use of coined money. Furthermore, proximity to the Seleucid empire could produce a change in methods of exchange and commercial relations (sometimes temporary), such as the bilingual Greek/Aramaic silver coin series imitating Seleucid coins issued by a ruler from the west coast of the Arab-Persian gulf, for a time, during the Seleucid hegemony in the gulf (Robin 1974; Salles 1987, 81; Potts 1990, II, 58-69). It may be right to see this as a temporary impact of the Seleucids on trade, which

necessitated an accommodation to the dominant methods of exchange, therefore tending to rely more upon coined money (Salles 1987, 87).

Trade

There is some evidence of royal promotion of trade and commerce, such as grants of *ateleia* (tax immunity) by Seleucus II to Rhodian merchants unloading cargoes in Syria (Polyb. V 89, 8-9; cf. below p. 71). There are also the grants of *ateleia* for promoting commerce at fairs and festivals, such as the village of Baetocaece in Syria:

> Letter of King Antiochus. King Antiochus to Euphemus, greetings. I have issued the memorandum which is appended below. Let action be taken as instructed on the matters which you are to carry out.
>
> A report having been brought to me about the power (*energeia*) of the god Zeus of Baetocaece, I have decided to concede to him for all time the source of the god's power, (namely) the village of Baetocaece, formerly held by Demetrius, son of Demetrius and grandson of Mnaseas, (who lived) at Tourgona in the satrapy of Apamea, together with everything that appertains and belongs to it, according to the existing surveys, and including the revenues of the present year, so that the revenue from this village might be spent for the celebration of the monthly sacrifices and the other things that increase the prestige of the sanctuary by the priest designated by the god, as is the custom. Fairs exempt from taxation are also to be held every month on the fifteenth and the thirtieth; the sanctuary is to be inviolate and the village exempt from billeting, as no objection has been lodged against this. Anyone who should violate any of the above provisions should be held guilty of impiety. A copy (of the instructions) is to be inscribed on a stone stele and placed in this same sanctuary. It will therefore be necessary to write to the usual officials so that action is taken in accordance with these instructions. (*RC* 70; Austin 178)

The more common aim of ancient empires' control of routes, and so unhampered enjoyment of supplies, may well lie behind the Seleucid policy of maintaining an active presence in the Arab-Persian gulf, perhaps from the time of Seleucus I (Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985; Salles 1987), thus tapping the Indian trade via the gulf and that in spices from South Arabia. Otherwise, active trade is attested by coin finds, by material finds (such as amphorae and imported objects on Failaka), customs dues and local taxes. Imperial control and trade do not of course correspond exactly. Trade with India by land and sea in specific Indian products like teak, Indian spices, jewels and precious stones went on and can be documented both from literary references and, in the case of jewellery, surviving objects where the origin of a precious stone is actually Indian (cf. Boardman 1970). The incense presented by Seleucus I to the sanctuary of Apollo at Didyma was

probably also imported from India; certainly, the *costus* (Vedic *kushta*) and cinnamon (from Ceylon) can only have been acquired from there (Salles 1987, 90):

> King Seleucus (I) to the council of the Milesians and the people, greetings. We have sent to the sanctuary of Apollo at Didyma both the large lampstand and drinking cups of gold and silver for dedication to the Saviour Gods. They are being brought by Polianthes and are inscribed. You, therefore, when he arrives, taking them, with good fortune, deliver (them) to the sanctuary in order that you may be able to pour libations and employ them, we being in good health and enjoying good fortune and the city remaining safe as I wish and you pray. Carry out the instructions of Polianthes by making the dedication of the items we have sent and performing the sacrifice which we have enjoined on him. Take care, therefore, that it be done properly. Of the gold and silver items sent to the sanctuary I have appended below for you a list in order that you may know both the types and weight of each. Farewell.
> (List of items sent:)
> A *phiale* of date pattern, inscribed 'of Good Luck': weight 247 drachmae
> Another of date pattern, inscribed 'of Osiris': weight 190 drachmae
> Another of date pattern, inscribed 'of Leto': weight 198 drachmae, 3 obols
> Another of ray pattern, inscribed 'of Hecate': weight 113 drachmae
> A pair of double deer-headed rhytons, inscribed 'of Apollo': weight 318 drachmae, 3 obols
> Another double deer-headed rhyton, inscribed 'of Athena': weight 161 drachmae
> A horn, inscribed 'to Zeus the Saviour': weight 173 drachmae, 3 obols
> A wine pitcher, inscribed 'of the Saviour Gods': weight 386 drachmae
> A barbarian wine-cooler set with gems, inscribed 'of Sotira', with 7 'dates' missing: weight 372 drachmae
> A gold bread-platter: weight 1,088 drachmae
> Total weight of gold vessels: 3,248 drachmae, 3 obols
> A silver cup decorated with figures in relief, with a cord: weight 380 drachmae
> A great 2-handled wine-cooler of silver: weight 9,000 drachmae
> 10 talents of frankincense; 1 talent of myrrh; 2 minae of casia; 2 minae of cinnamon, 2 minae of *costus*. A great bronze lamp-stand.
> He (sc. Polianthes) brought also a sacrifice for the god: 1,000 sheep and 12 steers. (288/7; *RC* 5; cf. Burstein 9 (letter only))

Similarly, it is clear from our archaeological evidence that the eventual detachment by nomad conquerors of Parthia from the Seleucid empire and the independence of Bactria stopped neither trade between Parthia and the Seleucid realm nor trade between Parthia and Bactria (cf. Colledge 1987, 152). There was no commercial or cultural iron curtain between the Greek-ruled east (Bactria and the Seleucid empire) and Parthia (see further below, pp. 73; 89). It is an old mistake to suppose there was. The vulnerability of communications

between Iran and Bactria-Sogdiana via north-east Iran (Parthia/Hyrcania), 'the umbilical cord', is often stated; what is less frequently pointed out is that communication with Aria and Arachosia, and thence with India, was open via the Meshed route skirting the north of the salt desert and running south of the Elburz range, in other words to the south, and independent, of Hyrcania and Parthia (see in detail Chapter 3).

The king and the economy

Pseudo-Aristotle encapsulates the king's fiscal administration (*oikonomia*):

> It has absolute authority and has four aspects (or 'categories'), viz. concerned with coinage, with exports, with incoming goods and with expenditure. In the case of coinage I mean what types need minting and when; in the case of outgoings and incomes when and how disposal should be made after receipt from the satraps as their contribution; on expenditure what must be cut and when and whether expenses should be met by merchandise in kind or by money. ([Aristotle] *Oec*. 1345b7)

The assumptions underlying this manifesto are the king's knowledge of income in any one year, the existence of choice in expenditure, which is the king's prerogative, the profitable management of income and disbursements; also the assumption that exchange in kind is a normal option is an important revelation (e.g. for trade with India).

The king's practical knowledge of the 'economy', e.g. of the sums taken in the annual receipt of revenues, may in reality have been less ideal and less neat; compare I *Maccabees* on Antiochus IV's actions before his expedition to the Upper Satrapies:

> He ordered all the forces of his empire to be assembled, an immensely powerful army. He opened his treasury and gave a year's pay to the troops, ordering them to be prepared for any duty. But he found that his resources were running low; his tribute too had dwindled ... (I *Maccabees* 3.27-9)

Hence, as far as *Maccabees* is concerned (omitting the expense of the king's Egyptian war as a reason), this explains his tribute-raising expedition to Iran – but even *Maccabees* allows that the king could pay an army.

We know from a variety of sources, literary and documentary, of the multiple crown taxes that the Seleucids evolved, innovating as well as adapting and continuing older Achaemenid fiscal practices. It is important to note that there seems to be no differentiation in royal theory between Greek and non-Greek places in liability to taxation,

but specific taxes could vary from region to region, as would the grant of immunities. Thus, unless granted immunities, cities, Greek and non-Greek, were liable to a variety of royal taxes; land tax (cf. Doty 1977; Stolper 1989), a general sales tax, a slave sales tax, a crown tax, poll tax, taxes on imports and exports, salt tax and, in war, special levies. Where there were crown taxes, these were administered by royal officials in cities. Paradoxically, we learn most about the scope of Seleucid crown taxation from grants of immunity to individuals and to groups. The grant of immunity from specific royal taxes and/or temporary relief was, unsurprisingly, a royal prerogative; for example, Antiochus III's grants, in the case of Jerusalem (no poll tax for the senate, priests, scribes and temple singers, cf. above pp. 51-2; cf. too Sardis, see below pp. 181-2), – the numbers involved were hundreds, if not thousands. Grants of freedom from tribute were made to Greek cities of western Asia Minor and Thrace (Lysimachea, Erythrae, Teos, Colophon), usually probably at times of crisis or take-over for political reasons, but also, as in the case of Sardis, tax-relief to help the city's recovery after a siege and the resultant damage. Comparable, too, is the Cardaces inscription, reflecting the later, severe economic problems resulting from war for a military colony that goes back to the Seleucid period (i.e. the Cardaces, who were non-Greek mercenaries settled in the Telmessus region of south-west Asia Minor by Antiochus III):

> King Eumenes (II) to Artemidorus. I have read the comments you appended to the petition submitted by the settlers in the village of the Cardaces. Since after investigating you find that their private affairs are in a weak condition, as their trees are not yielding much fruit and their land is of poor quality, give instructions that they may keep the piece of land they bought from Ptolemy and the price they did not pay because most of them have no resources left, and (give instructions) not to exact the money: and since they must pay for each adult person a poll-tax (*syntaxis*) of four Rhodian drachmas and an obol, but the weak condition of their private affairs makes this a burden to them, (give instructions) to exempt them from the arrears (of this tax) for the sixteenth year, and of one Rhodian drachma and one obol from the seventeenth year; and for all those whom they (sc. the Cardaces) introduce from the outside, (give instructions) that they be granted exemption from all taxes for three years, and for those who have previously left the area but now wish to return, exemption for two years; and (give instructions) that they may repair the fort they previously had, so as to have a stronghold, so long as they [provide] themselves the rest of the expenditure, while I myself pay for a skilled craftsman. (Year) 17, the fourth day from the end of Dius (= 181). (F.G. Maier *Griechische Mauerbauinschriften* I (1959), no. 76; Austin 202)

So, political, economic and social forces are at work here in influencing royal policy. As ever, taxation served a dual function; its imposition brought revenue, exemption could buy political support.

One of the main resources for the crown was the exploitation of the land, a main basis of ancient economies, though not the only one (cf. above for trade and commerce). Here, recent work has made it necessary to modify some older approaches to the economic impact of Macedonian rule and colonialism (de Ste. Croix 1981, 155-6). A starting point is the modification of the prevailing views about economy and society in the Achaemenid period (which was not in decline, cf. van Driel 1987), and the need to recognise regional diversity and the absence of any one over-riding system of production and exploitation (enshrined in Marx's concept of the 'Asiatic Mode of Production', cf. Hindess/Hirst 1975, 178-220). Another factor is the recent modification (Briant 1982b; Thapar 1981) of some Marxist characterisations of this system of production which has, classically, been seen as a static economy where state land is farmed by a dependent labour force. This view has had to be reassessed in a variety of ways: first, internally, by the realisation that landowners were not, globally, of one type (such as, for example, the temple, cf. above pp. 59-61); private ownership of land existed, therefore diverse economic relations also existed (Thapar 1981; Rathbone 1989); secondly, externally, by the inadequacy of the model of the Asiatic mode of production for explaining the dynamics of economic growth and land exploitation fostered in the Achaemenid empire by what Briant has called 'the tributary method of production' (*RTP* 405-30; cf. also Hopkins 1978). It was not the Greeks who 'awakened the east' with the introduction of a 'commercial spirit', encapsulated (so it was thought) by the market economy of a Greek polis – it should suffice to cite the extraordinarily complex trade-network run by the city of Assur in the nineteenth century (for a recent summary cf. Larsen 1987; for the sophisticated Phoenician mercantile system cf. Frankenstein 1979) to demonstrate the inappropriateness of this idea. Thirdly, there is the continuing dilemma over slavery and a slave-based economy as a supposed Greek innovation in the Seleucid empire. This should be rejected as a red herring. Historians of ancient societies of the near east have long been aware of the existence and use of slaves in considerable numbers, for example, in Babylonia (Dandamaev 1984; van der Spek 1990; for the Old Testament cf. Jackson 1988). On reflection, there is perhaps more truth in Kreissig's idea than his critics suppose that the Seleucid state is closer to the ancient empires of the east (Kreissig 1978), though 'oriental state' is a label to be avoided because it lacks meaning and explanatory value. Another point worth considering is that the Greek economic systems were perhaps not so fundamentally different from some of those further east.

Another question is the king's claims to ownership of land. As conquerors, the Seleucids might claim control of all, but in fact traditional claims to the use of land continued, subject alike to

confiscation and enhancement by bequest at the king's will (cf. Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –273 ll. 36′-37′, see above p. 46). It is obvious that the Seleucids inherited from the Achaemenids vast tracts of 'crown-land', estates, forests and mines (for a list of the Persian royal estates, cf. *RTP* 451, n. 109). The agricultural land was worked by royal *laoi* (crown tenants, cf. *RTP* 95-135) who, in Asia Minor and Syria, are found as categories of peasants farming land belonging to estates granted to important personages (e.g. Mnesimachos, Bogaert 1976, no. 36; Austin 181), royal relations (*OGIS* 225; Austin 185) and on city-land (Priene).

The Seleucid kings seem to have fostered 'economic growth' of regions of their empire by the active extension of the agrarian bases in specific areas, such as Ai Khanoum and perhaps Failaka, as well as by maintaining earlier Achaemenid irrigation systems, such as the *qanats* (which require regular upkeep, cf. Smith 1953, 75-6; Beaumont/Blake/Wagstaff 1976, 88) described by Polybius (X 28) in the context of their destruction by the Parthians – a fact which implies their continued maintenance, active use as well as economic importance. They brought new areas under cultivation by means of the *kleroi* system (cf. above pp. 55-7), as for example at Failaka, and issued contracts with obligations of cultivation (e.g. later Avroman (Minns 1915, 52) cf. p. 77; the Jewish colonists in Lydia (Josephus *Antiquities* XII 151, cf. above p. 55). One should note also the royal interest in the importation of new species, such as Seleucus I trying to grow Indian aromatics, probably cinnamon and possibly even frankincense in Syria (Pliny *NH* XVI 135, cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, 1165) – behaviour for which Assyrian (e.g. Sennacherib's attempt to grow cotton: Luckenbill 1924, 111, l. 56; Potts 1990, 134) and Persian kings (Darius' commendation of Gadates for transplanting fruit-trees from Syria to the Aegean coast, Brandenstein-Mayrhofer 1964, 91 no. 2; their possible introduction of rice cultivation to Mesopotamia and Susiana, cf. Potts 1991) provide a precedent. This kind of activity is typical of imperial rule (Brockway 1983).

The reverse side of the coin, the drains on the economy, is not a subject usually studied (cf. Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1990, 271-2). A potential wealth of information on fluctuations of the economy in Babylonia – grain prices, river levels, weather conditions, diseases – is now becoming available through the publication of the astronomical diaries (Sachs/Hunger 1988; 1989; a third volume in preparation), which note, routinely, this information for each six-month period. When fully studied and analysed this should provide invaluable material for charting long-term trends as well as short-term crises in a central, agriculturally rich area of the empire. The bureaucracy, of course, consumed resources and the army had to be paid – when periodic shortfalls occurred it could prove dangerous (cf. above p. 58).

The massive and elaborate campaigns (e.g. Seleucus' war with Lysimachus, the Syrian wars, the war against the Gauls, Antiochus III's *anabasis*) as well as war indemnities (like those imposed by the Romans on Antiochus III in 188, cf. Polyb. XXI 43; Austin 161) could swallow up great chunks of the imperial budget. The building of cities, so actively pursued by the Seleucids, required, at least initially, major royal investments, as did their patronage of buildings constructed within cities (e.g. at Uruk, cf. Falkenstein 1941, 4-7; at Borsippa, cf. above pp. 36-7; at Babylon, cf. *ABC* 11; Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –273, see above p. 47). To this must be added the relief which the crown attempted to provide in times of natural disaster (earthquake, famine, climatic extremes) as at Rhodes:

> Seleucus (II), the father of Antiochus, besides granting exemption from custom dues to Rhodians sailing to his kingdom, and besides giving ten quinqueremes fully equipped and 200,000 medimni of corn, gave them also 10,000 cubits of timber and 1,000 talents each of resin and hair. (Polyb. V 89, 8-9)

Although not precisely quantifiable, the imperial expenses must have been enormous; yet the impression is that, while control over their huge empire lasted (and there were no very serious losses until later in the second century), the economy was healthy and resilient enough, despite periodic problems, to meet these requirements with relative ease.

CHAPTER THREE

The Seleucid Empire in Iran and South-West Central Asia

Perceptions of the Seleucid state in the third century veer, mainly adversely, between postulations of radical diminution on the 'periphery' and a less extreme position (Bengtson 1951; Schmitt 1964), depending upon the view that is taken of the state of Seleucid control of great land stretches in eastern Iran and the south-western parts of Central Asia – Margiana, Aria, Drangiana, Hyrcania, Parthia. Most of the discussion has been carried on in scholarly journals and has not substantially affected assessment of the operation of the Seleucid empire. One corollary to belief in the Seleucids' loss of most, if not all, of these possessions at an early date, is inevitable, namely the idea that the Seleucids' grip on their territories was weak. If they did lose any of these regions, then the question obviously arises as to who took over and when. This then involves, *inter alia*, discussion of the relative growth of the Greek Bactrian kingdom (cf. below pp. 107-11) and of Parthia, especially – it is usually assumed – with regard to the status of Aria and Margiana.

The aim of this chapter is, first, to try to correct some current misconceptions and see if a more positive picture can be built and, secondly, to stress that, while it matters to historians to know who is ruling where, the question of what changes in dynasty actually mean, and how drastic their impact in terms of Seleucid control may have been, is not as simple as has sometimes been assumed. As we shall argue, it is most probable that all the satrapies mentioned above were and remained in some real sense 'Seleucid' until after the defeat and death of Antiochus III the Great.

An important general point should be made now in order to lay misunderstandings about routes in north-east Iran to rest (see Fig. 4). Alexander crossed the Elburz, after traversing the Southern Gates of the range, in order to campaign in, and conquer, Hyrcania, *not* because it was the only route into Aria – he returned via Hecatompylus. Analogously, Hyrcania is on Isidore of Charax's trunk route, while

Hecatompylus is absent, because Isidore was writing of the Parthian period and the then main route, which led across the mountains to Nisa, the Parthian capital of Mithridates I, and thence east. Near eastern ancient historians, but not classical ones, recognise the existence of two main trunk roads in antiquity, the second being the south route, through the southern Caspian Gates, along the *south* slopes of the Elburz (and Comisene = area of Damghan) to Herat, which thus did not go through modern Gurgan (= ancient Hyrcania). This route passed some forty kilometres south of Meshed and continued to Herat (Hansman 1981). Gurgan was traversed by the other of the two main trunk roads which today link Teheran with the north-eastern city of Meshed, familiar in the great Iranian epic, the *Shahname* (cf. Vogelsang 1988). The consequence, ignored by most modern hellenistic historians, is that neither 'Parthian independence' nor Parthian occupation of Hyrcania cut Seleucid links with the important east Iranian provinces of Aria, Margiana, Drangiana or Bactria (Frye 1962, 12).

With rare exceptions (e.g. Frye 1984, ch. 6: a judicious survey and probably the best starting point for students, esp. 156ff.), Seleucid rule in Iran tends to be seen as partial, superficial, peripheral, resisted, troublesome and given low priority. This is by comparison, so it is supposed, with Seleucid rule in Syria and Asia Minor. Will's (1979, 301ff.) influential doctrine was that two major Seleucid failures were, first, their inability to solve the problems of control (distance and space), to which an answer is that no dynasty or government has or could. His second point is pretty characteristic (cf. Tarn 1938), namely the 'failure' of the Seleucids to solve the problem of relations between colonised and colonisers, i.e. the role of Greeks and of hellenism among what is seen as an imperial people (the Persians). Implicit is the poor showing of the Seleucids by comparison with Alexander (a view now wrong in most respects) in seeking 'reconciliation' to their rule in Iran. There is old and new evidence of Seleucid use of Persian (and other ethnic groups) in administration and the army (Sherwin-White 1987, 6-7). The shortest answer to the second objection is, of course, that historically these problems exist with all relations between rulers and ruled, and ultimately, the only solution to relations between colonised and colonisers is decolonisation.

The view sketched here is rather different. Until caught in the mid-second century, between the new expanding powers of Parthia and Rome, the Seleucids exercised, or seem to have exercised, either suzerainty or direct rule over most of non-desert Iran. Control of Media, for example, and the possession of Susiana, an area of great importance, economically, militarily and strategically, by the Seleucids in the third and early second century are well documented. Furthermore, Seleucid rule was consolidated, first, by repeated,

serious military campaigns by kings in person (third to second century); secondly, by colonisation in Iran (e.g. Austin 158), clearly reflected in literary sources and now backed by epigraphic and archaeological data (see pp. 76; 163-4); and, thirdly, by the establishment of military zones and garrison sites (see pp. 59; 77). Further, the royal presence is also indicated by the use and functioning of mints in Iran (Ecbatana, Susa: cf. *ESM* 107ff., 163ff.), by royal proclamations with regard to policy (see p. 204) and by the presence of the crown-prince and co-regent (see above p. 24). The pattern of Seleucid colonisation in Iran has largely been lost, and if and how colonies in one region (Persis) fitted with those in another Iranian region in strategy and time is unknown. But we do know of new foundations such as Laodicea-Nihavend, Seleucia-Eulaios at Susa, Antioch-Persis and others as well as the military colonies.

Western Iran: Media and Persis

The literary sources attest military aspects of the occupation (military posts = *stathmoi*) in Persis (Polyaenus VII 39; 40) and at Rhagae in Media (Ptolemy VI 2,17) and at smaller places (Isidore of Charax). In addition, we can now see that it is no longer useful to accept at face value, and as our explanatory text of Seleucid policy towards Iran, Polybius' description of Media as ringed by Greek cities (Polyb. X 27), if this is taken to indicate a policy of policing from a distance and thereby, implicitly, marginalising the Seleucid presence in, and concern with, Iran. The discovery of the site of Laodicea-Nihavend, located by the find of a royal inscription identifying the place as a Greek *polis* (cf. Robert 1949; Austin 158; below p. 204) at Nihavend, *inside* Media, on the fertile Nisaean plain, some sixty miles from, and on the route to, ancient Ecbatana/modern Hamadan, the main route from Babylonia through Media and on into Bactria, has cast important new light on Seleucid policy. The *terminus ante quem* for this foundation is the reign of Antiochus III; but the site could date from the reign of Antiochus I (for the Greek finds there cf. Colledge 1987, 145). Here is a *polis* founded in the Median heartland, not on the margins. Whatever the social, economic and cultural relations with the local population, the hellenised settlers are in the heart of an Iranian landscape and cultural setting, bang on the routes to Susa, Kermanshah, Hamadan and Bactrian cities, such as Ai Khanoum. A little further south, at modern Kangavar, a huge 'post-Achaemenid' site, which may be a city, lay on the main route between Bisitun and Ecbatana, where excavations by the Iranian archaeological service began in 1969. The pottery seems to have been local, but there is some Greek influence in the architecture, for example, Doric columns from a huge temple (cf. Colledge 1987, 149 fig. 8).

Was the situation any different in Persis, homeland of the Achaemenid dynasty? Is the idea that a 'national' opposition to the Macedonian conquerors and to hellenism was sustained here viable (Eddy 1961, 75-100)? Another ingredient of this view is belief in a religious opposition to the Seleucids, which has been thought to stem from a supposedly tight linkage between the Achaemenids and Mazdaism/Zoroastrianism (Boyce 1982). But this approach is perhaps too simple. First, the role of Mazdaism in Achaemenid kingship is highly controversial (cf. Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1980, ch. 1; for a brief survey of the complexities see Malandra 1983, 23-6), and its precise role in Achaemenid imperialism unclear; so that the notion of this in particular as a religious-political focus for Persian resistance is very uncertain. Secondly, the Seleucids, like the Assyrian (cf. Cogan 1974; McKay 1973; van der Spek 1983) and Achaemenid kings, practised what is usually called 'religious tolerance' (cf. Briant 1986), with regard to the cults and beliefs of the different peoples within their empires. In the case of the hellenistic period we have evidence of the continuation, for example at Sardis, of a cult with some Persian connections, from the Achaemenid period through into the early Roman empire:

> In the 39th year of Artaxerxes, Droaphernes, son of Barakes, governor of Lydia, dedicated the statue of the Zeus of Baradates. He forbade his (sc. Zeus') *neokoroi therapeutai*, who have the right to enter the *adyton* and to crown the god, from participating in the mysteries of Sabazios, of those who bring victims to be burnt and of Angistis and of Ma. (Robert 1975; for comments and improved translation, cf. Frei 1984, 149; Gschnitzer 1986)

Also known is the practice of Persian ritual in the Seleucid army, in which a Persian religious festival was celebrated and which provides indirect attestation of the Iranian element in the army (Polyaenus IV 15). Further, the strength of traditional Persian religion is indicated by coins (cf. Frye 1984, 160) and the continued use of cult sites (attested archaeologically) in the Seleucid period (Persepolis; cf. most recently Wiesehöfer 1986, 80-93).

None of this is intended to deny that the Persians had a very specific belief system setting the *Persian* king within a moral-political framework that made him central to the maintenance of *arta* (cosmic order/truth) as opposed to the destructive forces of *drauga* (chaos/falsehood), which might make it difficult for them to accept an outsider on the Persian throne. It is striking that the one place in the Achaemenid empire where Alexander seems to have failed to establish, ultimately, a successful working relationship with the local population was Persis itself – a fact which probably accounts for his brutal

destruction of Persepolis, as well as a later Iranian tradition extremely hostile to him (Briant 1987b, 98-100). It is therefore possible that despite Peucestas' apparent success in making Macedonian rule more palatable in Persis and a Seleucid policy of respect for certain elements of Persian imperial culture, there were groups in the region that continued hostile to the new kings. It is thus conceivable that an accommodation between the old and new ruling group was beset with specific problems not found elsewhere in the empire. If so, very little of these difficulties can be recovered and Seleucid control is definitely attested.

Certainly, uprisings among Persians and Macedonian colonists in Persis occurred (cf. above p. 29); and Pasargadae was not a major Seleucid centre from *c.* 280 on (Stronach 1978, 155-6). But a Greek presence, if only that of a garrison, continued at Persepolis as is indirectly indicated by the monolingual Greek altars for Zeus Megistos, Apollo, Helios, Artemis and Athena from Persepolis, still unpublished, that the French epigraphist Louis Robert saw and dated to the first half of the third century (Robert 1967, 282; Herzfeld 1935, 44; Wiesehöfer 1986, 84-5 wishes to date them to the late fourth century). After, and no doubt because of, Alexander's destruction of Persepolis, Istakhr (near to Persepolis) became more important (Wiesehöfer 1986, 71-2). 'Persis' remained a Seleucid satrapy in the third century: it was under Seleucid rule at the beginning of Antiochus III's reign, when there was trouble in Iran, and was administered by a Macedonian satrap (Alexander: Polyb. V 40,7). In the intervening period a Greek *polis* named Antioch-Persis, with typical Greek politico-social institutions, had been founded (for its possible location, see Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985, 9 n. 8), the *terminus ante quem* of which is the reign of Antiochus I (*OGIS* 233; Austin 190).

Two series of coins are important, if ambiguous, evidence for the status of Persis in the third and second centuries. It is crucial to distinguish the two series. One is from Persepolis, dated to either the third or early second century and bearing the legend *frataraka*, which is a title, the precise meaning of which ('official' (?) or 'satrap' (?) in the Achaemenid period Aramaic documents from Egypt, cf. Wiesehöfer 1991) is uncertain. The Iranian dynasts who minted these were almost certainly local vassal rulers, whose position was perhaps analogous to that of, for example, Xerxes of Armenia (Frye 1984, 161; cf. p. 190); another possibility is that they represent a dynasty of local Seleucid governors. Comparable also are the early Arsacid rulers, whose first coins, like the *frataraka* coins, bear a man's head wearing satrapal headdress, without the diadem denoting kingship, and personal name without title (Greek and Aramaic). It is vital to separate these coins from a second Persian series, dated by many numismatists to the later second century. These show significant

changes in headdress, a different and new title in Aramaic, *MLK'* 'king', and the appearance of Achaemenid dynastic names such as Darius and Artaxerxes (Frye 1984, 161; Koch 1988). This should not mislead one into assuming total independence for Persis, rather it reflects the development of a tiered system of authority, as indicated by Strabo:

> The hegemony of the Persians over Asia lasted about 250 years. But now, though again organised into a state of their own, the Persians have kings that are subject to other kings, formerly to the kings of Macedonia, but now to those of the Parthians. (Strabo XV 3,24)

Seleucid garrisoning in western Iran is well attested (comparatively speaking). It can be seen in the organisation of a military zone in the strategic area of Kermanshah, vital for the control of routes, and in the extensive garrison at the site known, since the famous archaeologist and explorer Aurel Stein visited it, as the Karafto caves. Here we are on the mountainous northern borders of Seleucid Media, where the frontier lies in the ravine of Karafto, separating Azerbaijan to the north from Kurdistan in the west. Here in caves in an isolated site off routes, where the surrounding countryside was unsuitable for pasturage – in other words, not an agricultural settlement – was discovered a great complex of rooms and galleries. Initially, primarily because of the Greek inscription over the entrance: 'The son of Zeus, Fair in Victory (*Kallinikos*), Heracles dwells here; let nothing evil enter' (written in late fourth/early third century lettering), Stein identified the site as the local sanctuary of a god assimilated to, or identified with, Heracles (Stein 1940, 338). Bernard's re-examination of the site, which recognises it as a Seleucid garrison (see above p. 59), made the important point that such apotropaic inscriptions are common in Greek domestic buildings and do not *ipso facto* provide any argument whatsoever for identification of the place as a sanctuary, which the site does not itself suggest. His reinterpretation of the place as a fort, with an official residence, places for meetings and for the quarters of a garrison with store rooms, and his articulation of the strategic, but not any other, importance of the place, make his brilliant reconstruction likely to be correct and fit with our other evidence of Seleucid military policies (Bernard 1980a). It can be seen, linked to the probable Seleucid garrison at mountainous Avroman, in the Zagros range, above the plain of Shahrizer and north-west of the gorges of Siwan, as being tied to the need to protect Seleucid territories from the tribes of the mountainous zones and from the independent area of Azerbaijan to the north-west. The independence of the area of Media Atropatene, named after Atropates, satrap of Media under Darius and Alexander (now Azerbaijan), under local Iranian dynasts, was

pre-Seleucid (Arrian *Anab*. IV 18,3; VII 4,5; see above p. 18). His power was limited to the north-west and less accessible part of Media, at the redistribution of satrapies, including the rest of Media, which went to Peithon, in 323 (D.S. XVIII 3,1). The area was regarded as an independent kingdom (Strabo XI 13,1) under first the Seleucids and then the Armenians, the Parthians and Rome and probably was so from 323 (Bernard 1980a, 308 n. 27; Schottky 1989).

It seems mistaken, in view of the developing evidence for the Seleucid mechanism of colonisation, to approach Seleucid policy towards 'Iran' as different from that towards neighbouring satrapies, such as Babylonia, where satrapal rule was in force, or from areas where a local ruler might be employed. The Seleucid mints attributed to Susa and Ecbatana continued through the third century. Under Antiochus III, Iranian troops were heavily used by the king both against rebel satraps and in the major set piece battles of his reign (see pp. 53-5; 213-14), as well, of course, as in garrisons and in important positions in the army and administration (see p. 79). One should probably take the late fourth century reliance on the manpower of Media and Persis as reflecting the normal policy of the Seleucids in a region where vassals (even the ruler of Atropatene) could be overawed by a king's use of the mechanism of a show of force (Polyb. V 55).

On the issue of the ideals of Achaemenid kingship, where Briant (1987b, 96-101) has shown how Alexander utilised key concepts of the king's role, we alas have literally no evidence at all of court ceremony in the palaces at Susa, Ai Khanoum, Ecbatana, and Seleucia-Tigris. When it is appreciated how fully the Seleucids stepped into the shoes of earlier Babylonian kings, and how very well this is attested, we may be left wondering whether the Seleucids continued or adapted modes of Achaemenid kingship too for their Persian subjects. They certainly utilised what are generally regarded as Achaemenid-style penalties (also employed by earlier Egyptian and Assyrian rulers) for traitors, but such punishments may well have been widely used throughout the ancient (as, indeed, later) world for treason (cf. *Odyssey* XXII 474-7, the death of Melanthios) and are simply better attested as spectacular, public executions when inflicted by rulers of large and powerful empires; by themselves such penalties are not evidence either for or against a continuity with Persian-style rule (*pace* Cary 1951, 114). More positively, the Babylonian cylinder of Antiochus I from Borsippa reflects the adaptation of some Achaemenid royal elements (cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991). Whether local inhabitants practised, for example, *proskynesis* (formal obeisance), as continued in the hellenistic kingdom of Bithynia and, of course, Parthia, is unknown but not unthinkable. Significant, though quantitatively tiny, evidence for assessing something of Seleucid attitudes to their Persian subjects are the Aramaic letters on a 'victory' coin of Seleucus I from Persepolis,

showing that the mint-master was a local Iranian, that the Seleucids were prepared to use non-Greeks in important administrative positions and that the Aramaic in use in the region from the Achaemenid period on continued to be employed by the administration (Houghton 1980, 4).

Aria (region of modern Herat)

The region of Aria is known to have been Seleucid under Seleucus I and Antiochus I as it definitely was after Antiochus III's great campaign in the east against the Parthians and Bactrians. The problem is to know what happened in the intervening period when there is a blank in the documentation. There is no direct evidence (yet) from epigraphy, coin hoards or literature under whom this area was at the time of Antiochus III's *anabasis*. Should this silence be interpreted as indicating that Aria had been absorbed by one of the neighbouring regions? The idea that the area was 'Bactrian' is not well founded *pace* Narain (1957). Strabo XI 11,2, referring to the loss of two of the satrapies into which Bactria was divided, is a red herring since Strabo is talking about Bactria under the Greek-Bactrian, not Seleucid, kings (who ruled from the late 160s on, see Tarn 1938, 183-224) and therefore about losses of portions of Greek-Bactrian Bactria, not to a Seleucid loss of Margiana or Aria. Arguments based upon the fact that Antiochus III met Euthydemus in battle on the river Arius do not tell us anything about the status of Aria at the time (Polyb. X 49; XI 39). It would be possible to argue that since Aria is not mentioned in the terms between Antiochus III and Euthydemus as a place restored that Euthydemus had not 'conquered' it.

The idea that Aria was Parthian in the later third century (Will 1979, 301ff.) rests on false assumptions about the impact of the Parthian occupation of Parthia and about the consequences of their *temporary* occupation of Hyrcania (for the routes see above pp. 72-3). Some modern ancient historians assume that the Parthians' move into the Seleucid satrapy of Parthyene actually cut the Seleucids off from Aria, which one glance at the map shows to be false. Others assume that the Parthians' raids into Hyrcania (sometimes transformed into the 'conquest' of Hyrcania by the time of the accession of Antiochus III) cut the 'umbilical cord' of the Seleucids, namely communications eastwards via Aria (Herat). As discussed (above p. 73 and see below Chapter 4), to get to modern Herat, ancient Aria, you do not need to cross to the north side of the Elburz mountains but could take the route along the south side of the Elburz, which the modern road takes today, skirting the foothills of the range and the north edge of the great salt desert, via Nishapur, Meshed and then south to Herat. In the third century this route still had the *qanat* water supplies alongside which

the Achaemenids had built and which the Seleucids evidently had maintained (Polyb. X 28; Briant 1984, 67). These the Parthians had, in their incursion, sabotaged by about 210. But any Parthian occupation of Hyrcania was irrelevant to Seleucid access to Aria. Parthia's temporary occupation of Hecatompylus would have been an obstacle if it was in Comisene, but its location is uncertain and there is no evidence that any Parthians got there in a permanent fashion before the second century when, and not before, the whole focus of Parthian power shifted southwards. The Seleucid coins from a mint of Seleucus II do not help (*ESM* 251f.) as it is uncertain whether the mint is of Hecatompylus or Aria (Will 1979, 156 and 303). Seleucus II's campaign against the Parthians did not involve Aria. Aria did not join the revolt of Molon against Antiochus III. There is no evidence whatever that it did not remain Seleucid, like Drangiana, with which it is linked by easy routes.

Drangiana (modern Seistan)

Drangiana was a very fertile area, irrigated as it was from the river Helmand, and in addition to this value, had further importance in that the easy 'low' route east went through it. It is not, perhaps, surprising then to discover that, in addition to highly developed urban centres of the third millennium (Tucci 1978), important sites of the Achaemenid, Seleucid and Parthian periods have been discovered and excavated there (Fairservis 1961; Gullini 1964; Scerrato 1966). In the period of the Successors, and in the reign of Seleucus I, Macedonian satraps are attested such as Stasanor (D.S. XVIII 3,3). After this there is no direct evidence. That a Greek element was present, later, is indicated by finds of Greek *ostraka* and Greek artifacts of hellenistic date, including an (unfortunately still unpublished) eleven-line long *ostrakon* in Greek of third-century date, to judge by the lettering. It seems more than likely that Beloch and his followers were right to argue from Polybius' description of Antiochus III's unremarked march through both Drangiana and Carmania on the return from his *anabasis* (campaign upcountry) that these satrapies were still Seleucid (Polyb. XI 34,13-14) and still regarded as belonging to the Seleucid empire by the kings (note also the Carmanians in the army in 217, cf. Polyb. V 79,3; for the tiny pieces of evidence for Seleucid Carmania cf. Potts 1989, 581). In addition, for the period of Aśoka earlier, there is the evidence of Aśoka's own words (in *c.* 256) for whom the Seleucid king, Antiochus II, was a *neighbour* (see *MRE* 13, quoted below pp. 101-2). It is clear from this that the two kingdoms were then contiguous with a frontier somewhere west of Kandahar (in Arachosia; cf. Fraser 1979, 15 n. 20); so Drangiana, and perhaps Aria, would both have lain along the Mauryan imperial frontier. Aśoka's statement would certainly not

make much sense if the nearest Seleucid province were Media Paraetacene (eastern Media, i.e. around modern Isfahan). Note, too, the local imitation coinage, for interchange with 'Greeks', on the Seleucid model of the third century from the site of Koh-i Taftan in Seistan. Unfortunately, the political implications of this are uncertain, as so little is known about the local organisation of the inhabitants and any colonial or military enclaves within the satrapy (Mitchiner 1975, ch. 10).

Hyrcania (modern Gurgan)

Hyrcania lies in north Iran at the south-east corner of the Caspian Sea, bounded by the two mountain ranges of the Elburz and the Kopet Dagh. It was under Macedonian control from Alexander's conquest and became part of the empire of Seleucus I (Appian *Syr.* 57). In the third century, as in the Achaemenid period, there were settlement areas on the lowlands and mountain slopes, habitable – in contrast to the jungle forests of Mazanderan to the west – because of the drier climate. As perhaps in the Achaemenid period, a problem for the central government was its function as a funnel for incursion from the steppes of Dahistan to the north, to which Hyrcania is a transitional zone, and for the raids and large-scale invasions of Sacae from the Oxus and Aral, which the forbidding space of the Karakum desert north of the Kopet range checked, but did not stop: hence, later, the vast defensive barrier, the so-called 'Wall of Alexander', was built either in the Parthian or more probably the Sassanian period, about 180 km along the right bank of the river Gurgan, with 31 forts (recorded in Schmidt's survey of 1940, 34 and 55ff.). Hyrcania was recognised as part of the Seleucid heritage and was a satrapy. From somewhere around the south-east corner of the Caspian Sea comes a third-century Greek inscription, said to be 'from Hyrcania', first published by Louis Robert (1960: 85-91 and pl. V; *SEG* 20, 325), which records – unusually, in the form of a letter – a sacral manumission of the category familiar from the Greek inscriptions of hellenistic Susa, but nearly a century *earlier*, and in this case also attesting in Iran a Greek cult and sanctuary of the god Serapis (Fraser 1967, 29) to whom the manumitted slave was dedicated 'on behalf of' the reigning Seleucid king, Antiochus I, and his queen (as in Babylonian texts, cf. Sherwin-White 1983b).

> Euandros to Andragoras (and) Apollodorus (Seleucid officials), greetings: We have made Hermaios free on behalf of King Antiochus and Queen Stratonice and their offspring and sacred to Serapis and have set up in the sanctuary [the record of] the liberation of his person and of his possessions. [Day ...], (month) Gorpiaios. Farewell. (Probable date:

281-261, reign of Antiochus I; although the period of Antiochus' co-regency with Seleucus I cannot be excluded. Robert 1960)

This inscription clearly reflects Seleucid government here and probably a colony of some sort. Towns existed before the Macedonian occupation (Vogelsang 1988; Strabo XI 7,1-3) and we know from Polybius that Greek enclaves settled, or were settled (it is unclear which), in them, as at 'Syrinx' (Polyb. X 31,5), where the Greeks were massacred during Antiochus III's *anabasis*. Polybius' reference to a *basileion* (palace) there probably refers to the Seleucid satrapal *basileion* (not a Parthian palace). There is no literary evidence for the foundation of Greek cities and there has been no discovery, or excavation of hellenistic Greek sites in the area. It was an area always subject to raids from the northern steppe which happened in the third century too. Another fragment of Polybius (X 48, cf. Strabo XI 7,1-3; Onesicritus *FGrH* 134 F4) seems to catch the Greeks' surprise at the ability of tribes of 'Sacae' to reach and raid Hyrcania (as well as crossing a deep river) in the context of Antiochus III's reign. At that time, the Parthians too pushed into, and gained (temporary) occupation of, the region. It was not until the second century, after Antiochus III, that the focus of Parthian power shifted firmly southwards, as is reflected in the move and transformation of Nisa into a new administrative centre and royal capital with the consolidation of power under Mithridates I (171-138) and the Parthian expansion into Hyrcania *and* south of the Elburz.

Margiana

Margiana (southern Turkmenia, the area around modern Merv) is the name given to the narrow corridor of the river Murghab valley – a strip of irrigated land, 10-12 km wide in antiquity, separated by the Kopet Dagh mountains on the west from Parthia and bounded in the north by the Karakum mountains, where the river drained into the Merv oasis. The most fertile area, the Geoksiur oasis, is separated by the extensive desert on the west from the foothills of the Kopet Dagh bordering Parthia and isolated further by the desert in the north. It is an area separated by physical geography from Parthia and Hyrcania. It was reachable (in Seleucid perspective) from Aria (Herat) or from Bactria. In consequence, its attachment to the Seleucids would depend in large part on the status of Aria and Bactria respectively. Seleucid activity is witnessed at first hand by the general of Seleucus I, Demodamas, who was there and saw Antiochus I's reconstruction of Alexander's foundation in the settlement area of the Achaemenid period (modern Erk-Kale). The site, 30 km east of modern Merv, was refounded on a large scale in a great quadrangular pattern (cf. Bernard 1982a; *pace*

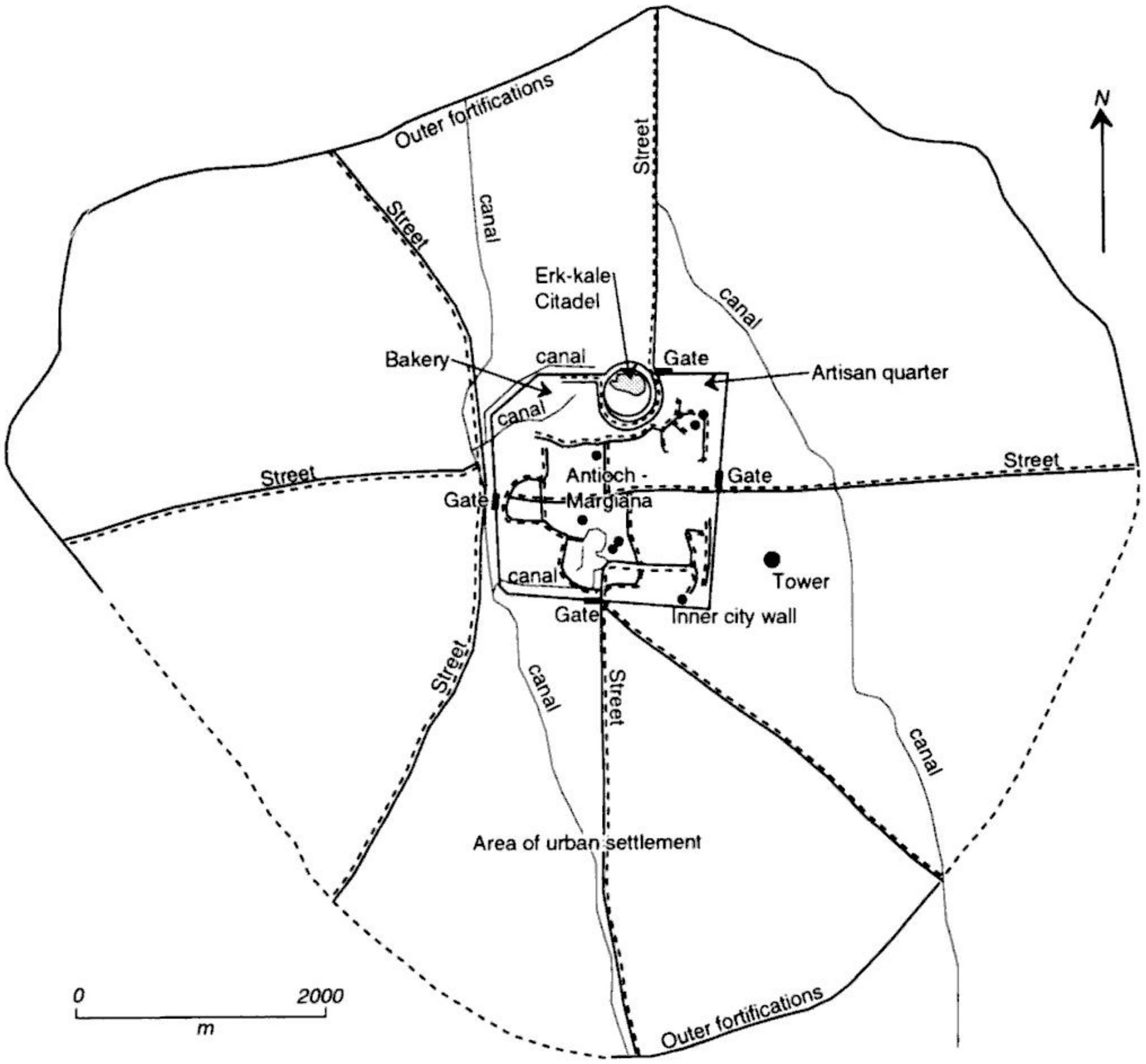


Fig. 3. Antioch-Margiana (after Masson 1982).

Bosworth 1981). Excavations have revealed something of the layout of the site, Gyaur-Kale (see Fig. 3); it was apparently crossed by two principal streets, intersecting at right angles: the Achaemenid citadel, Erk-Kale, was taken within the fortification and served as citadel of the new foundation (Masson 1982, 141). The Greek pottery parallels that from Ai Khanoum and from level II Afrasiab (Samarkhand). Strabo gives an interesting description (probably going back to Demodamas, Robert 1984):

> Margiana is similar to this country, although its plain is surrounded by deserts. Admiring its fertility, Antiochus I enclosed a circle of 1,500 stades and founded a *polis*, Antioch. This land is also good for the vine. (Strabo XI 10,2)

The Soviet excavations have found large sections of walling evidently intended as protection for the settled population. The date of this is uncertain (Atagaryev/Berdyev 1970 indicate the Parthian

period). Besides its fertility, the area was also on an ancient trade route from Iran to Central Asia and beyond, linking Bukhara to the north-east and the Zarafshan valley (Frye 1984, 18). After Antiochus I, we have no direct evidence of the status of Margiana under the Seleucids. The numismatic evidence of a third-century find of Greek Bactrian coins is difficult to analyse. The presence in Mithridates I's reign of his coins and the discovery of Parthian inscriptions (sherds) too may well indicate that the area had by then become Parthian. All we can say is that as long as Aria remained Seleucid, Seleucid control of Margiana was possible.

Parthia

> In the beginning he (Arsaces) was weak, as were those who succeeded him. (Strabo XI 9,2)

The current view of the rise of the Parthian kingdom and of the impact of this upon the Seleucid central power and the peoples in the empire is one of the best examples of uncritical fantasy in modern hellenistic historiography. The accepted consensus of hellenistic historians (Walbank 1981, 123; Will 1979, 301ff.; Wolski 1966; Bickerman 1965; Tarn 1938; Bivar 1983) is that by 239/8 (or earlier in the 240s) the Parthians, under their first king, Arsaces, had snapped for ever 'the umbilical cord' linking the Seleucid empire to north-east Iran and its provinces eastwards, and thus created a cleavage and the loss for the Seleucids of their eastern satrapies.

This view, which usually is obsessed with what aspect of Seleucid rule helped to precipitate the supposed disaster, mainly misses the point and conceals the more important historical problem of trying to understand the character of Parthian penetration, the reactions of and results for the inhabitants and their kings. There are, also, some very basic questions, which are usually ignored: first, frontiers – the topography and geography, especially the routes, of the Achaemenid satrapy named Parthava, which the Seleucids apparently maintained, is still relatively unknown and certainly unfamiliar to hellenistic historians, as are the boundaries with other 'neighbouring' satrapies. It is not an accident that there is no good map of Parthia in any text book and that the area is usually only most generally indicated on maps with a logo.

We are, in fact, talking of the mountains in the north-east corner of modern Iran and of south Turkmenistan, specifically the area including the two ranges of mountains, the Kopet Dagh range in the north (running along the present frontier between Iran and Turkmenistan) and the south Khorasan (or Binalud) range, north of Nishapur (see Fig. 4); the narrow valleys between these two ranges are

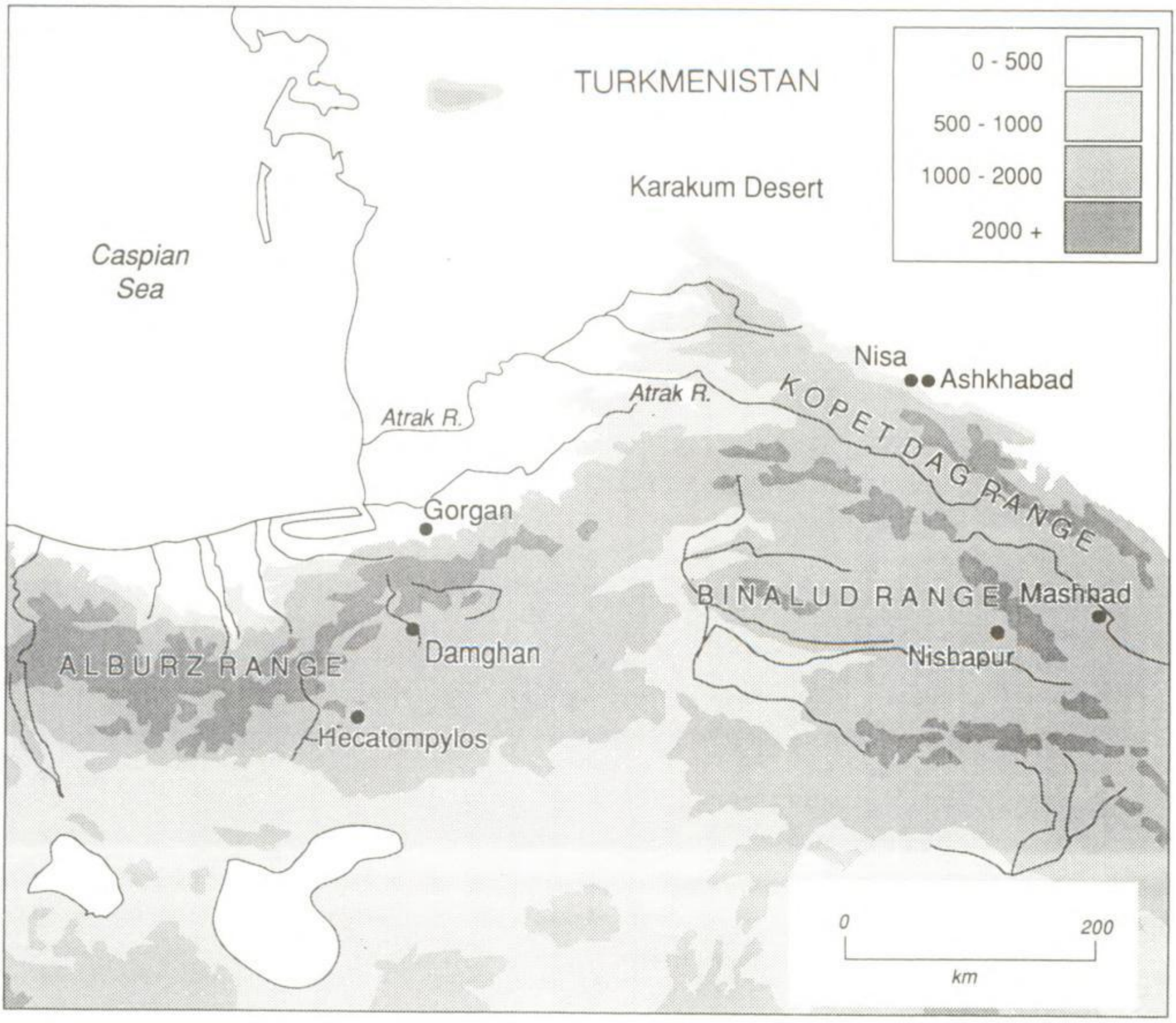


Fig. 4. Parthia.

relatively fertile and can be irrigated by *qanats* dug from the mountains. Thus, whatever factors lie behind the Parthians' eventual rise to greatness as a power (note that Strabo, in his time, saw Parthia as a serious rival to Rome), it was not the area which they took with, it must be stressed, great difficulty from the Seleucids, but factors such as their military organisation and their social institutions as well as good leadership, which enabled them to retain and organise their conquests,

Secondly, apart from this failure to spell out, or even note, what a remote and rugged place Parthia was and explore these problems, many are led astray by the assumption that the Parthians were able to hold, from the 230s, a region south of the Elburz and sever Seleucid communications with the region to the east (see above pp. 79-80 and cf. below Chapter 4). The best approach is not to get bogged down in the problem of the exact date of the takeover but instead to consider some characteristics of nomadic movements (cf. Khazanov 1981; for cultural context see Rolle 1989).

The nomadic origins of the Parthians and, therefore, the slowness

and difficulty of their rise to political prominence are clearly illustrated, despite chronological problems, by Justin's and Strabo's accounts (cf. Bickerman 1983, 6). Crucial to understanding the perspective of their approach is their bird's eye view, both looking back, centuries later, from the contemporary position of the Parthians as a superpower threat to the great Roman empire (still the case in Justin's age, the second century AD), to their insignificant and hard beginning – a mythic story. Thus, Strabo begins his section on Parthia with these words:

> As for Parthyaia, it is not large; at any rate it paid tribute with the Hyrcanians in the Persian times, and also after this, during *the long domination of the Macedonians* (or 'for a long time during the domination of the Macedonians'). And, in addition to its smallness, it is thickly wooded and mountainous, and without resources (*aporos*), so that because of this the kings send their own hordes through it in great haste, since the country is unable to support them even for a short time. But *now* it is increased. Parts (now) belonging to Parthyene include Comisene and Chorene (from the mid-second century), and practically the whole region as far as the Caspian Gates, Rhagae and the Tapyri, which before were part of Media. (Strabo XI 9,1)

Strabo is talking here of the satrapal organisation and citing Polybius XI 9,3 as well as the second-century writer Apollodorus and the first-century Posidonius. He places Arsaces' invasion and conquest of Parthia in the context of the War of the Brothers (*c.* 241-235):

> And then Arsaces, a Scythian, with some of the Dahae (I mean the Parnians, as they were called, nomads living along the river Oxus (= Amu Darya)) invaded Parthyaia and got control of it. In the beginning Arsaces was weak, being continually at war with those who had been deprived by him of their territory, both he himself *and his successors*, but then (i.e. *later*) they grew so strong, gradually (or: from time to time), taking neighbouring territory as a result of their successes in wars, so that *in the end* they established themselves as lords of all the country inside (i.e. east of) the river Euphrates (i.e. by the 130s/120s) ... and now they rule over so much land and so many peoples (*ethne*) that in the greatness of their empire they in a way rival the Romans. The cause of this is their mode of life and also their customs, which contain much that is barbarian and Scythian, more however that is conducive to hegemony and success in wars. (Strabo XI 9,2)

Thus Strabo, on the – for a Greek – two great barbarian powers of his time.

Justin's books XLI-XLII, read in their entirety and not excerpted to illustrate *idées fixes*, contain a story of the gradual transformation of 'the most unknown' of the eastern peoples:

> These (sc. the Parthians), driven by civil discord/upheavals from Scythia, gradually (?furtively) seized deserted regions between Hyrcania, the Dahae Arei, (S)/Aparni, and Margiani. Then they moved their frontiers, first without any opposition from their neighbours, later despite their resistance; and they occupied not only vast plains and deep valleys, but also steep hills and high mountains. As a result, the greater part of the Parthian territory is subject to extreme heat and cold: the snow covers the mountains and the heat scorches the plains. (Justin XLI 1,9-12)

After the ethnography in XLI 2-3, Justin returns to what he terms 'defections' following the reign of Antiochus I and refers to the paralysing effect the War of the Brothers had on dealing with them. He sets Diodotus' defection and usurpation of kingship (see below pp. 107-11) here, and:

> All the peoples of the east followed his example and seceded from the Macedonians. At that time there lived a certain Arsaces, a man of dubious origins but proven courage. Accustomed to living from robbery and extortion, when he learnt that Seleucus (II) had been defeated by the Gauls in Asia and having nothing more to fear from the king, he entered the Parthians' (territory) with a troop of brigands and took their leader, Andragoras, by surprise and killed him. Having eliminated Andragoras, he made himself master of these people. Not long after, he also seized Hyrcania and having thus gained control of two states he raised a large army since he feared Seleucus and Diodotus, the king of the Bactrians. But soon, relieved of his anxiety by the death of Diodotus, he made peace and allied himself with the son of that prince, also called Diodotus. Not long after, he fought with Seleucus who had come to punish the defectors and he was victorious. Since then the Parthians have celebrated that day as the beginning of their freedom.
>
> As Seleucus was recalled by new troubles to Asia, Arsaces profited by the resultant respite to organise the Parthian kingdom, levy troops, build fortresses and consolidate his hold on cities. He even founded a city called Dara on mount Apaortenon, which had so many natural advantages that it is impossible to think of anything stronger or more agreeable. It is surrounded on all sides by steep crags, so effectively that the place needs no defences, and the surrounding earth is fertile enough to supply all wants. Springs and wood are so numerous that it is watered by abundant water and provides opportunities for hunting. After Arsaces had conquered and organised his kingdom he died at an advanced age, leaving a name as famous among the Parthians as that of Cyrus among the Persians, Alexander among the Macedonians, (and) Romulus among the Romans. (Justin XLI 4,5-5,6)

Arsaces was transformed into the Parthians' Cyrus, a figure of the stature of Alexander and Romulus – we are here in the *post eventum* mythologising of empire-founding, in the invention of tradition, a process by which these nomads annexed Parthyaia as their 'real' homeland and annexed, too, Achaemenid origins. Justin goes on to

depict key-points in Parthian 'progress' – alliance with Antiochus III (see below Chapter 7), victory over the Mardi and, above all, the second-century conquests of Mithridates, ending, like Strabo, with the extension of Parthian rule to the Euphrates, so important for contemporary relations with Rome.

We are dealing here as much with events outside and beyond the control of the Seleucid empire as with internal events, precipitating population movements into the empire. This is an old story for the Achaemenid empire, of course – the pressures from Sacae on settlement areas south of the Syr Darya (Jaxartes) – on, for example, Bactria are also attested under Alexander and Antiochus I. The movement of the Parthians is seen by Strabo and Justin as a migration, triggered by a hostile situation in nomad lands, not mere razzias of the type described by Polybius with reference to the Apasiacae (Polyb. X 48). The basic truth of this picture seems to be validated by the Parthians' ability to consolidate under Arsaces in Turkmenistan (they could not go back and were strong enough to survive), in the north Kopet Dagh, helped by the removal of the Seleucid satrap, Andragoras, when they got there: one should note the healthy fear of the Seleucids reflected in these accounts. Another truth underlying them is the difficult and slow emergence of the Parthians as a settled power, as reflected in the sites first occupied and developed as settled bases by them – Dara, Asaak, Nisa – in mountainous Transoxiana and Turkmenistan, *not* Iranian Khorasan and *not* south of the Elburz, as shown by the archaeological evidence (Colledge 1977). The process could be better understood by comparison with the nearly contemporary migrations of the Celts and their difficult and various fates.

The thrust of the literary sources is now supported in archaeology, which only since the Second World War (i.e. later than the great hellenistic historians', Bickerman's and Rostovtzeff's, writing on Parthia) has opened up Parthian Parthia through the Soviet excavation and publication of the sites of Nisa (excavated 1948-1961) and has released us from viewing the Parthians only through later literary sources and evidence from Iran and Mesopotamia. We now know that the great Parthian sites of old and new Nisa are located away on the north slopes of the Turkmen range, near modern Ashkhabad (see Fig. 4). Dara (possibly an old Achaemenid foundation and tentatively identified as a site near Abivard), which Justin says was a foundation of Arsaces, and was first burial place of the kings, is located in mountainous Apavortene, decribed as a safe place, well fortified and self-sufficient – clearly these were defensive, non-aggressive choices, suitable for the early and precarious stages of the emerging dynasty. Eponymous Asaak (Arshah) was, according to Isidore, where Arsaces was crowned. Although the exact location of

Dara and of Asaak in Turkmenistan is in fact still uncertain (Chaumont 1973), it is evident that their strong places, refuges, and settlements were on an axis far north of the Elburz, where Arsaces forged his small kingdom.

As the sources remarked, constant attacks on neighbours were a feature of Parthian society: this phenomenon was due both to their warrior culture and linked to the economic need to support the main arm of Parthian military strength – the cavalry. Having changed their nomadic pattern of seasonal pasturing, they needed land for cavalry, which was taken from the conquered (Briant 1984) and given, in Greek terminology, as *oikoi*. 'Expansionism' was endemic to this type of society, a factor the Seleucids had to face, but did not cause.

The exact status of the Parthians in relation to the Seleucid kings *is* uncertain. Seleucus II campaigned against them, claiming victories, the reality and direction of which is difficult to assess. His subsequent need to campaign in Asia Minor was followed by, and perhaps encouraged, the temporary Parthian capture of Hecatompylus, which was regained by Antiochus III; this is certainly how Justin saw it (see above p. 87). It is important to remember that it was not until after the defeat and death of Antiochus III, in the 180s, that, under Phraates I, Parthian troops undertook serious, sustained campaigns against the mountain peoples *north* of the Elburz. His successors *began*, by deportations, settlements and occupation on the *south* side of the Elburz, a process that was continued and completed in Iran by the greatest of the Parthian conquerors, Mithridates I, in the mid-second century. Only then (cf. Strabo XI 9,1), was Comisene, in which Hecatompylus possibly lay, added permanently to the Parthian conquests (Isidore). Most misleading is Polybius' inexplicable description (Polyb. X 28,7) of Hecatompylus as in the depth or middle of Parthia, which is understandable only for the later second century, when the Parthian empire did stretch into Babylonia in the west and up to Merv and Bactria in the east. By contrast, the little kingdom of Parthia in the second half of the third century was unable to, and did not, break up the eastern spine of the Seleucid empire. The location of Parthia's power was far to the north in Turkmenistan. It is crucial not to concertina a hundred years of wearisome, hard struggles for the Parthians, and, adopting a Romanocentric view of the Seleucid empire, project into the early stages of Parthia's emergence a false impression of a firmly established power extending across north-east Iran and south of the Elburz – a view which completely ignores the evidence of Parthian archaeology and geography (*pace* Musti 1984, 212; Will 1979, 264, 286). That the Parthians were still formally regarded as vassals of the Seleucids under Antiochus III is supported by some evidence: such as the fact that in early Parthian coinage of this period the Parthian kings did not invariably use the royal title and wore satrapal

headdress, albeit tied with a ribbon-diadem (cf. Worth 1903, 1-2, nos. 1-2), and the possibility that some of the mail-clad cavalry and mounted archers that figure so prominently in the battles of this period (see Fig. 2) were supplied by the Parthians to the Seleucid kings (cf. Bar Kochva 1976, 74-5).

*

As far as the often difficult and very limited evidence allows, the conclusion must be that in the third century the Seleucids followed the grandest designs of the Achaemenids, as circumstances allowed, centering their empire on the middle east, active in exploiting and fostering trade with India by land and sea, to which policy Iran was central, and ruling as heirs to the Achaemenids the most fertile, profitable regions, agriculturally, militarily and commercially. *Nothing* suggests any general Seleucid 'loss of nerve' or weakening of interest in their imperial heritage in Iran.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Eastern Frontiers and Beyond

This chapter sets out Seleucid imperial policy with regard to the eastern part of the empire and its immediate neighbours, i.e. the Achaemenid heritage, places this in a context and indicates, where possible, what areas were under direct Seleucid rule, where boundaries are drawn and why, and any changes detectable over time. It is important to compare Seleucid with Achaemenid policies, which form a model that the Seleucids consciously followed and adapted. The still inadequate nature of the extant sources may make it difficult to know what places were under Seleucid rule and when, but enough survives for an approximate picture to emerge. Most important, new perspectives need to be discussed, which affect historical reconstructions: first, archaeology in former Soviet Central Asia, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan particularly since the Second World War; secondly, work on the state as empire and the nature of imperialism, including greater sophistication of writing on the character and dynamics of the concept of frontiers and how they are permeated. It is important to remember that frontiers are contact zones, for example for the transference of goods, objects, ideas, people, as much as they are barriers (Lattimore 1979). Underlying this is a view of the Seleucid empire, adapted to new evidence and new approaches, which sets the major territorial losses in the mid-second century and sees the third-century empire as a relatively strong and cohesive power. The Macedonian/Greek colonies need to be studied in context, i.e. regionally, because of the different cultures (and histories) in which they were set. The idea of the segregation of colonial Greeks, on the model of the British empire, can be seen to be in part myth. In talking of imperial periphery, i.e. places distant from 'the centre', we do not mean militarily, economically, and socially peripheral, but simply geographically – on the frontiers of the empire. In this perspective, Babylonia is central; while Lydia and Hellepontine Phrygia are as peripheral as Bactria and Sogdiana.

Late fourth- and third-century India and the Greeks

For the Seleucids, as heirs to Alexander's empire and to the

Achaemenid empire, India, namely the areas of the north-west frontier and the Indus valley, was a legitimate target for expansion, attractive for its legendary wealth (ivory, gold, fabulous jewels, incense and spices), for exploitation of tribute and for control of trade routes. In spite of Greek myth-making which presented Alexander as the first person since the age of the heroes to enter India (Briant 1987b, 23-4), the Achaemenids, from Darius I, who conquered north-western India, to Darius III, imposed military and tributary obligations on the Indians (Briant 1987b, 37; Vogelsang 1990). The Persepolis tablets from the early fifth century illustrate the organised royal route which linked the centre to, for example, the Indian periphery (Hallock 1971, 29 n. 1) and the west (Sardis, cf. Lewis 1980). Alexander stopped in the Punjab and established *ad hoc* relations of suzerainty and direct rule in a sector reaching down to the mouth of the Indus through the selective destruction of Indian cities and massacre of their inhabitants, including at times women and children (see the horrific descriptions in Arrian *Anab*. VI 6-11). In the succeeding years, two kings, both great war leaders and empire builders, emerged on either side of the Indus – Chandragupta and Seleucus I; in this context of competing colossi the Seleucid 'failure' to retake Alexander's conquest has to be set in its Indian background (Allchin/Allchin 1982). In 1906, the problem of glimpsing the Indian prehistory of the Mauryan empire – its social, political and cultural map – seemed hopeless: the famous nineteenth-century British historian of ancient India, Vincent Smith, saw the reign of Aśoka (271-232) as the emergence of Indian history 'from darkness to light'. The situation now is a little different; there is more light on pre-Mauryan conditions and, paradoxically, less clarity about approaches to Aśoka.

The picture from archaeological surveys and excavations of this century has suggested a more or less uniform material culture already from the sixth century, as witnessed by the famous North Black polished ware (*c*. 500-200) 'one of the finest pottery types ever to be developed in India' (Allchin/Allchin 1982, 323), found over an area extending from the Lower Ganges to the Punjab. What this means in political terms is less clear, but it seems to be suggestive of a cultural cohesion that may also have had a political dimension. To this factor can be added the benefits for internal empire building of the unifying effects of external pressure, in the form of the brutal assault by Alexander – his extermination of whole Indian tribes, his physical destruction of cities both in the Indus valley and in the northern tracts between the rivers – in other words the disruption of basic social, political and economic patterns, the previous framework and organisation of Indian governments. Chandragupta's westward expansion was further facilitated both by the murder, on Alexander's death, of Alexander's Macedonian governors in India, and by the

withdrawal of Macedonian (and Indian) troops from the Indus valley to fight Antigonus and Eumenes for control of the middle east.

Several factors helped Chandragupta in transforming a mere military coup, i.e. toppling the ruling Nanda dynasty at Maghada in the Central Ganges basin, into an expanding, enduring empire. The kingdom of Maghada, based on the capital at Pataliputra, was fertile, well irrigated by the Ganges, and strategically set at the meeting of land and riverine routes (the Sone and the Ganges). Chandragupta seems to have played up and upon a stance of liberator at his takeover, to which Seleucus' invasion (*c.* 306) added some credibility. Seleucus' actual invasion of the Indus region demonstrates clearly enough his own initial policy of 'reconquest', re-establishing suzerainty over Alexander's dominion. Seleucus himself and his army crossed the Indus (Justin XV 4,12) and fought a pitched battle of which no details survive. A peace was made between Chandragupta and Seleucus which has been seen, unrealistically, in polarised terms, as either a victory or a defeat for Seleucus (Walbank 1981, 123; Tarn 1938, 100), whereas the truth is likely to lie somewhere in between, despite his coins which proclaim his Indian victory (e.g. *ESM* 38ff.). His gift of an Indian tiger to Athens (Athenaeus XIII 590 a-f) again may express propaganda about Seleucid claims to an Indian conquest, although it is not impossible that the tiger came from one of the Achaemenid royal parks (cf. the 'Indian dogs' kept in Babylonia in the fifth century, Hdt. I 192). There seems little doubt that Seleucus came quickly to appreciate the changed political situation in northern India, which was no longer a matter of rival kingdoms and city-states which could be played off against each other. Instead he came to recognise the growth of a powerful state radiating from the Ganges, whose formidable strength filled a vacuum.

The peace terms are briefly referred to by Appian *Syr.* 55 and Strabo XV 2,9 (cf. Fraser 1979; Bernard 1985, 85-96). The most important cession by Seleucus was the Indus valley (the donation of desert Baluchistan (Gedrosia) was probably little loss) and Gandhara (Taxila and Charsada), important strategically and economically for controlling trade routes with the Indus valley and the east. The Swat valley tribes of the Parapamisadae went too, as did at least east (i.e. desert) Arachosia (Strabo XV 2,9), which had been under Seleucid rule before the peace. West Arachosia (including Kandahar) was probably not ceded (Fraser 1979, 12) and remained the base for the Seleucid satrap from whose residence Megasthenes, as Seleucus' envoy, was to make several embassies to Chandragupta. Either under Bindusara (Chandragupta's son and successor), or under Aśoka, western Arachosia was brought under Mauryan rule. The later campaign of Antiochus III indicates that fertile Seistan (Drangiana) on the lower Helmand river, not included among Seleucus' territorial cessions, was

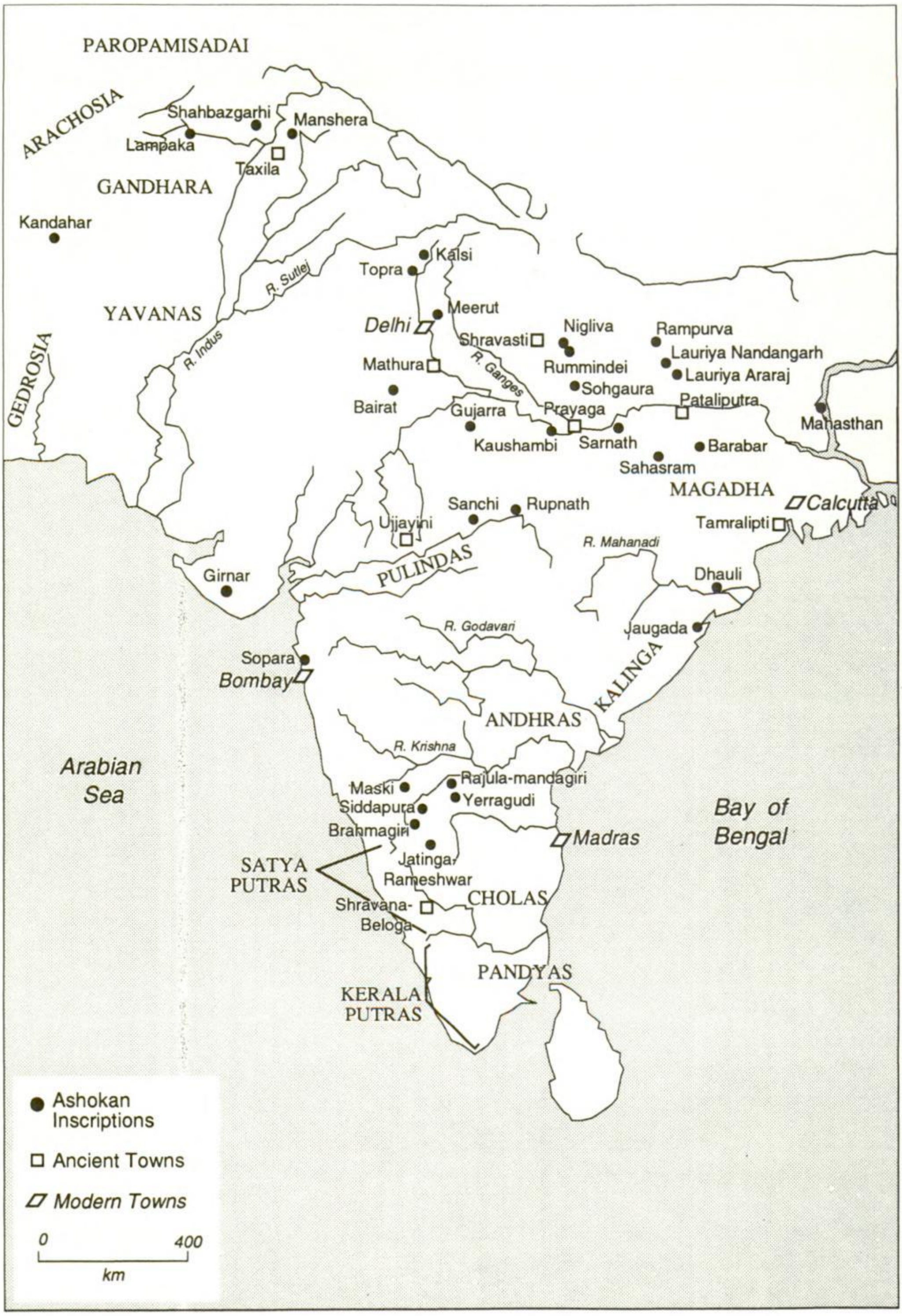


Fig. 5. Mauryan India (after Thapar 1966).

Seleucid and had apparently been so since the time of Seleucus. Certainly, the Italian excavations (in the 1950s and later) at Seistan sites have revealed Greek *ostraka*, such as a dedication 'To the gods' and an eleven-line *ostrakon* (third-century), from the village of Seh Khue (18 miles west of Zabol; cf. above pp. 80-1). Further hints of a later hellenised or hellenic presence is furnished by other evidence of 'Greek' settlement, for example the Greek inscriptions on local burial urns of the Parthian period.

There was no further attempt by Seleucus I or Antiochus I, his son, to expand into ancient India; indeed no attempt before Antiochus III was made to recover losses. Why not? is the question usually asked and answered in terms of the weakness of the Seleucid empire. The reason is that the dynamic Mauryan dynasty expanded, annexing the rest of Arachosia.

Chandragupta's rule was absolute:

> The founder of their (sc. the Indians') freedom was Sandracottus, but after his victory he changed into servitude the freedom which had only been a pretext; because, having seized the throne, he himself oppressed the people whom he had liberated from foreign domination. (Justin XV 4,13-14)

The empire under Chandragupta and his son is estimated to have been large, including north India to the Himalayas, west to Gandhara, south to Maghada and east to the Bay of Bengal (see Fig. 5). Alexander had been prevented from campaigning to the Ganges region by the war stress of his troops, by his knowledge of the adverse logistics with regard to further eastward expansion and the rumoured strength of a kingdom of which no accurate reports were available. Seleucus' information was better than that of Alexander as a result of his dispatch to Chandragupta's capital to gain first-hand knowledge of the Greek, Megasthenes, whose report gave eastern Greeks the 'best knowledge of inner India yet received' (Filliozat 1981; see above p. 13).

The literary antecedents of Megasthenes' *Indica* and the author's aims are fairly uncertain (see below), but they fit well in the historical context of the expansion and building of the Seleucid empire. Alexander's expedition may have provided a path for kings to emulate. What seems clear is that like Alexander's explorers and fact-finding missions, sent to discover how big, wealthy, strong and desirable a new country was, Megasthenes' visits uncovered and set out information of vital value as to population, wealth, military strength (especially of the elephant forces) and of the organisation (cohesion) of the kingdom. This aspect of Megasthenes' work has not been linked to Seleucid policy hitherto.

His work could be seen as providing some specific answers, besides attesting the greatness of Chandragupta's realm, e.g. one hundred and eighteen 'tribes' that are 'known' to Megasthenes, to other important strategic questions such as the size of the army – portrayed as impressively large, under the direct control of the king and 'professional' in so far as it was characteristically composed of 'warriors', reserved and paid for their service in the army. Megasthenes also observed the organised communication system, furnished by the royal roads, not a service enjoyed by the inhabitants of ancient Greece. Notable is the Achaemenid royal road to north-west India (Vogelsang 1985, 82ff.), which Megasthenes mentions (Strabo XV 1,11; cf. Arrian *Indica* 3,4) and which the later edicts indicate was kept up by Aśoka. *En passant*, Megasthenes talks about the character of Mauryan kingship: Chandragupta is recognised as a successful, absolute monarch and one who is in control, as the following extracts illustrate:

> The whole of the country is of royal ownership; and the farmers cultivate it for a rental in addition to paying a fourth part of the produce (*ap*. D.S. II 40,5: 'into the royal treasury') ... In return for freeing the land from wild beasts and seed-picking birds (the hunters) receive proportionate allowances of grain from the king ... No private person is permitted to keep a horse or elephant. The possession of either is a royal privilege, and there are men to take care of them. (Strabo XV 1,40-1)
>
> ... the armour-makers and ship-builders receive wages and provisions, at a published scale, from the king, for these work for him alone. (Strabo XV 1,46)
>
> The sixth (class) is that of the inspectors, to whom it is given to inspect what is being done and report secretly to the king ... (Strabo XV 1,48)
>
> Among the non-military departures he (sc. the king) makes from his palace, one is that to the courts, where he spends the whole day hearing cases to the end, even when the hour comes for the care of his person. (Strabo XV 1, 55)

From Megasthenes' description and from his own satrap's knowledge, Seleucus could learn how formidable an opponent he faced. However much we allow for hype, the Mauryan Indian empire became, after all, as large as the eastern half of Seleucus' own kingdom and was for the moment under powerful leadership. Hence, one would guess – and it can be little else – Seleucus' decision to abandon ideas of conquering the Indus area, and so rebuilding the Indus-Persian gulf link of the Achaemenid and Alexander's empire, or expanding eastwards any further. As it turned out, so far as we know, subsequent relations between the Seleucid empire and Chandragupta were diplomatic

rather than military, though this picture may well not represent the whole complex truth, and ignores the possiblity of border skirmishes, local feuds and local warfare.

These relatively friendly diplomatic relations were maintained between Chandragupta's successors and Seleucus' heirs. At the time, Chandragupta's Mauryan dynasty was the only power in the east forming a counterweight to Seleucus. Continuing commercial, social and cultural exchanges were advantageous for both. The Mauryan dynasty did not constitute, or erect, a barrier. Trade, for example via the Arab-Persian gulf with the Indus valley and by land through the north-west frontier went on, attested by the import of Indian goods – spices, gems, wood (teak) – by sea and land routes (for the evidence cf. above pp. 65-6).

It is worth stressing Megasthenes' great difference from contemporary ethnographers such as Berossus and Hecataeus. He is describing (and elevating) a kingdom that is *not* under Macedonian rule – a 'barbarian' place, inhabited by others, in the mode of a second Herodotus (Murray 1972), for whom the Mauryan kingdom was a worthy counterpart to the Achaemenid empire studied by Herodotus. His work should be read as a legitimation of Seleucus' non-conquest, describing an apparently well-organised empire (allowing for idealisation and propaganda) of formidable power. Mesopotamian parallels were relevant for a new kingdom centered in Babylonia and are specifically addressed by Megasthenes. It turned out that precedents were not too embarrassing – the legendary Assyrian queen Semiramis' 'failure' to take India, viewed as an historical event by Megasthenes, occurred only because she died. Nebuchadnezzar, so important a personage for the Seleucid presence in Babylonia (cf. Kuhrt 1987a, 55-6; Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –187, cf. below p. 216), is mentioned and the king is credited with great expansion westwards, to the Pillars of Hercules, not to the east. Megasthenes presents the Indians as a freedom-loving people, who could therefore, ideologically, justifiably be left to enjoy their 'freedom' from conquest, much as Antigonus I's historian, Hieronymus of Cardia, 'explained' Antigonus' abandonment of warfare against the Nabataeans (D.S. XIX 94; Hornblower 1981, 177-8), or, later, Polybius in the case of Antiochus III's campaign against Gerrha (Polyb. XIII 9). Respect for 'freedom' was a convenient diplomatic formulation masking the perception of the huge problems facing any plans of conquest of these peoples.

The Mauryan state

A good idea of the great size of the lands under Mauryan rule can be gleaned from Crooke's now classic account of the misnamed *North-West Province of India* (1897). This took in the whole valley of

Ganges Jumna, extended to the Bay of Bengal and included the west Punjab and the lands north to the mountains of the Himalayas, some 107,503 square miles (an area slightly smaller than Italy); it formed one province of the British Indian empire and was approximately the area of the Mauryan kingdom.

By the time of Bindusara (297-272) the Mauryan empire extended as far south as the Deccan (to Mysore, cf. Thapar 1966, 71), to the sea in the east and north to the Himalayas, west to the region of the cities of Taxila and Charsada. The huge extent can be inferred from the location of the edicts of Aśoka (cf. Fig. 5). An argument that Aśoka abandoned expansion appears ill-founded; the 'evidence' is what has been thought to be Aśoka's remorse about the effects of conquest which led to his conversion to Buddhism (Thapar 1966, 72). But he still warns the 'forest peoples' to keep peace and tells governors to oversee peoples of the forests (south, north and west), beyond the empire. The incorporation of Arachosia, whether by war or peaceful means, had of course occurred earlier (cf. above p. 93).

Our two main sources are Megasthenes (discussed above), contemporary of Seleucus I, and King Aśoka's own contemporary pronouncements in the various surviving versions of his edicts. There is also some archaeological material from the period which, though limited in quantity, is of enormous value in demonstrating, for example, the impressive imperial style of architecture, modelled on earlier Indian and perhaps Achaemenid precedents, which the Mauryan dynasty developed (cf. Wheeler 1966, figs. 131, 132, 134). Indeed the excavated, contemporary remains of lengths of timber framework from the royal capital at Pataliputra match Megasthenes' description (cf. Wheeler 1966, 117-18):

> Palibothra lies at the confluence of the Ganges and the other river (the Sone), a city eighty stadia in length and fifteen in breadth (i.e. over nine miles long and over one mile broad), in the shape of a parallelogram, and surrounded by a wooden wall that is perforated so that arrows can be shot through the holes; and that in front of the wall lies a trench used both for defence and as a receptacle of the sewage that flows from the city. (Strabo XV 1,36)

Megasthenes has inevitable faults of cultural determinism, hellenocentric bias, some bad judgments, and is as gullible at times as Herodotus could be, but he is also a vivid reporter with all that implies. Besides the sources mentioned already, some (limited) later sources include Indian legend (the Aśoka legend), Buddhist tradition and Kautalya's *Arthashastra*, a later manifestation, not a contemporary analysis, of Mauryan rule (the text as it now stands dates from the third to fourth century AD; any closer dating is problematic: cf. Thapar

1961, 218-25). While it is obvious that neither Megasthenes' description nor Aśoka's documents can be read at face value, they may, if due respect is given to the function of these texts, reveal something of the realities.

Megasthenes' Mauryan state was an empire analogous to the Achaemenid and, naturally, to the Seleucid empire. He depicts the royal control of irrigation, of taxation, of the treasury, of communications (the Royal Roads), royal ownership of land and a centralist autocracy. It was an absolute monarchy and a military one. Megasthenes' impression of the strength of rule from the centre may be in part due to his information and to his residence at the capital, so that he knew less about the relations of the centre to periphery (cf. Thapar 1981; Briant 1987a). Writing for a Greek audience, he vividly depicted the 'other' that he saw (or heard about) in Indian culture, especially with regard to women – such as suttee, harems, daring *akosmia* in dress, women participating in military conflicts – and, more generally, specifically stressed the simplicity and small size of tombs (Strabo XV 1,54), in contrast to the late-fourth-century funerary monuments of some Greek cities and the pomp and splendour of Indian kingship ceremonial. It is interesting that a detailed piece of knowledge of Indian officials, attested in the Mauryan empire, namely the *mahamatra* of Aśoka's edicts, can be recognised in the later Greek gloss, '*mamatrai – hoi strategoi par' Indois*' ('generals among the Indians'), in Hesychius (Benveniste 1966, 151). Is the source for this some other Greek writing on the administration of the Mauryan empire (so Benveniste), or could it survive from Megasthenes? His account is certainly no worse than those of some European travellers, whose dotty beliefs, gullibility and racial bias make bizarre reading; for example, the belief in the extreme antipathy the horned cattle of India always exhibited towards Europeans (see for this attitude and others Dyson 1971, 29, 31).

Either little survives, or Megasthenes wrote little about the visual impressions he had of Indian art, architecture and culture (or, for example, Indian music) by comparison with Herodotus' stories about Babylonia and Egypt. What is also left out, and what is missing from most writing on this and other eastern countries until the later twentieth century, because it was taken for granted, is the wildness of nature and the harshness of life, affecting town and country alike – famines, sudden climatic disasters, such as ferocious hailstorms, hurricanes, lethal animal life and the prevalence of disease which constituted man's world. These conditions were reported by nineteenth-century administrators but only studied in the twentieth century (cf. Crooke's *North-west Province* on the huge numbers of deaths per annum from snake bites and tigers; Melville 1984 for weather hazards in Iran). Megasthenes' ignorance of southern and northern India is a consequence

of the limits of his travelling. This lack of knowledge led him to a characteristic (and wrong) generalisation about the fertility of India and the absence of food-shortages, based on his own knowledge of only the fertile Ganges plain and its irrigation system, while the Deccan deserts were unknown to him. Here he clearly is writing with his eyes on the poverty of ancient Greece. He is, however, a great deal better than some of the early, pre-rail, modern travel writers castigated by Dyson. He is a singularly rich source on the contemporary Indian world he observed.

Aśoka's edicts too should not be taken at face value. They exist, furthermore, in versions which were left to local officials to edit – not issuing from the royal chancellery – and are thus not literal or exact translations of the originals, but approximations turned to the culture by which they were to be received (Robert 1958). Quite apart from the fact that there is no corroboration of any effect they may have had, they are as open to scrutiny (and disbelief as to facts) as any official edict. Their main importance is agreed to be the evidence they provide of socio-religious policy aims, rather than of actual imperial administrative policies.

There has in the past been a great stress on the primarily centralist character of Aśoka's empire (cf. Thapar 1961). This view tends to be somewhat modified now both because of improved understanding and reading of the texts and because of more sophisticated methodological approaches to the nature of imperial states (Fussman 1982). But there can be little doubt of the absolute character of the kingship, or of the 'universalist' claims of Aśoka's rule, familiar from Achaemenid and Neo-Babylonian traditions. Aśoka was unique among contemporary hellenistic monarchs in using the religious social ethic of a then minority group in an attempt apparently to encourage social cohesion in an empire diverse in populations and sects, comparable rather to Akbar's spreading of Islam than to the Roman emperor, Constantine, in whose time Christianity seems to have been already widespread and organised. It is uncertain how far, if at all, Aśoka had political aims in view and wanted to promote Buddhism for anything further than modifying sectarianism. What recent scholarship has emphasised (Fussman 1982) is that Aśoka's edicts do not attest the *de facto* centralism of the Mauryan empire. They are concerned mainly with the propaganda and propagation of Aśoka's particular interpretation of *dhamma* (Skr. *dharma* = Univeral Law/Righteousness) as an attitude of social responsibility (cf. Thapar 1966, 85-8). What is politically interesting and significant is the incidental information about imperial officials, provincial governors and their underlings, and the power they enjoyed in proportion to their distance from the capital. As in the Seleucid empire, cohesion must have depended in large part on the efficacy of supervision and control over local governors and their

loyalty (cf. above p. 48). Nevertheless, centralised institutions and a strong kingship existed in the first part of the third century, as may be gleaned from Megasthenes and from Aśoka's mode of government.

Aśoka, Greeks and Iranians

The discovery in 1958 of a bilingual Greek/Aramaic rock inscription near Kandahar, in Afghanistan, and in 1964 (at Old Kandahar) of a monolingual Greek inscription, both containing copies of part of Aśoka's edicts, was an exciting new beginning in efforts to understand Indian, Iranian and Seleucid relations in Aśoka's reign:

> [Greek text:]
> Ten years having been completed (259/8), King Piodasses (= Aśoka) made a piety known to men, and afterwards more pious he caused men to be and all things to flourish throughout the whole land; and abstinence the king practised from animate (things), and also other men and all who were hunters and fishermen of the king have ceased hunting, and if there were some incontinent men, they have ceased from their incontinence to the extent possible, and they are obedient to their father and mother and the elders in contrast to before, and in the future more profitably and better in every way will they live by doing these things. (Schlumberger et al. 1958; Burstein 50)
>
> [Aramaic text:]
> For ten years penance (?) was done by our lord Priyadarsi, the king who promotes truth. Since then disaster for mankind has decreased. He has caused all hostile things (?) to disappear, and in the whole land joy is great. And further this: for the sustenance of our lord, the king, very little killing is done. Because of this all people have stopped (killing animals), and those who catch fish, for them it is forbidden. Further: those who were incontinent (? doubtful meaning), have ceased from incontinence. And the people obey their mother, their father and the elders, as fate has determined it. And there is no judgment for those who are pious. This is of use for all people and will continue to be useful. (Donner/Röllig 1973-1979, Nr. 279)

Indian copies of Aśoka's Major Rock Edict 13 had already revealed that Aśoka claimed that 'Greeks' and 'Iranians' (*Yonas* and *Cambojas*) were inside his empire and apparently followed the (Buddhist) *dhamma*. The Kandahar inscription for the first time located one group of 'Greeks' (hellenised or ethnic) at Shahr-i Kohna (Old Kandahar, cf. further Fraser 1979). Aśoka himself also distinguished Greeks among peoples outside his empire as not having brahmans and needing them:

> Except among the Greeks, there is no land where the religious orders of brahmans and śramanas are not be found, and there is no land anywhere where men do not support one sect or another ...

> The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *dhamma* to be the foremost victory. And moreover the Beloved of the God has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of 600 *yojanas* (*c.* 1,500 miles), where reigns the Greek king named Antiochus, and beyond the realm of that Antiochus in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, and Alexander, and in the south over the Colas and Pandyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise here in the imperial territories among the Greeks and the Kambojès, Nabakhas and Nabhapanktis, Bhojas and Pitinikas, Andhras and Parindas, everywhere the people follow the Beloved of the God's instructions in *dhamma*. (*MRE* 13, cf. Thapar 1961, 125-6)

Why did he pick them out? Because the Seleucids were his neighbours, and were named among the hellenistic kingdoms he mentions. And perhaps because of the Greeks within his kingdom.

Aśoka's royal edicts were 'published' by being set out, somewhat in the manner of modern motorway advertisements, in high profile, on major highways at important crossing points of communication (Fussman 1982). The Kandahar inscriptions were written in 'good Greek' and inscribed in a beautiful contemporary Greek hellenistic script with, on the rock face, an accompanying Aramaic version reflecting Iranian linguistic influence (cf. Donner/Röllig 1973-9, vol. 2, 335-7). Old Kandahar, as is known from the British excavations of 1976-8 (Helms 1982) and from the earlier discovery of the monolingual Greek version on building blocks (in other words, from a monument) of the surviving end of edict XII and edict XIII, had at the time a 'Greek' element and had been an Achaemenid fortified city before Alexander's conquest – another instance of Macedonians taking over existing Achaemenid centres. It is hard to say what can be deduced from the discovery of the Greek Aśokan edicts at Old Kandahar and of the dedicatory inscription about the character of the settlement. The Greekness of the place has been exaggerated (e.g. Fraser 1979) – after all the rock edict of Aśoka there was bilingual, the place had been Achaemenid and is more likely to have been multicultural, as is typical of other places in the Seleucid empire. Both Greek and Aramaic were living languages in the sense of their current use, and the traditional view seems to ignore the Iranian element. While it is true that most interest has been paid to the Greek versions of Aśokan edicts by ancient historians, it is important to remember the Aramaic version from Lamghan, Pul-i Punta, with Prakrit original inscribed above – again attesting the continuing use under Aśoka of Achaemenid scribal language (and possibly even style, cf. Thapar 1966, 74). We must also remember that the Mauryan dynasty, like the Bactrian later, developed a palatial style of art and architecture that may have been modelled on Achaemenid prototypes (cf. above p. 98; for criticisms of Wheeler's view of direct Achaemenid influences on Mauryan archi-

tecture see Nylander 1988). The Mauryan dynasty, like that of the Seleucids, inherited and adapted Achaemenid institutions and culture.

Bactria

Ancient Bactria to the Greeks was a miracle of fertility whose wealth lay in oases and extensive pasturage (cf. Q.C. VII 4,26; 30). Bactria was bounded on the north by the middle Oxus and its tributaries, in the north east by the Pamir mountains and in the south by the Hindu Kush. Soviet archaeologists tend to use 'Bactria' to cover a larger region than has been conventional, north across the Oxus (modern Amu Darya) to the river Jaxartes (modern Syr Darya = ancient Sogdiana) (see Figs. 6 and 7). This is primarily because the concept of a common first-millennium (and pre-Achaemenid) culture within Bactria has gradually emerged from the excavations. However, Sogdiana is geographically different from Bactria in the combination of more mountains and more desert, but it also contained rich oases, such as Marakanda (modern Samarkhand), and, in the first millennium, it was a region revealed by excavations as having its own specific and sophisticated civilisation, with complex irrigation systems to support agriculture, cities and fortified villages (Masson 1982; Francfort 1988; Kuzmina 1977). Under the Seleucids, Bactria-Sogdiana formed one vast satrapy, under the rule of a single satrap, as in the Achaemenid period. The division into several satrapies, which Strabo refers to (XI 11,2), came with the rise of an independent Bactrian kingdom. Under the Seleucids the frontier zone (to the north) was not a cut-off point of no contact between the empire and a 'remote beyond' of barbarian nomads: that lay to the north of Sogdiana – the river Syr Darya, beyond which stretched the vast steppes of Central Asia and Siberia, far distant. Bactria was not on the geographic periphery of empire. Also, it must be remembered that the line between nomads and sedentary peoples is not a socio-cultural caesura (Lattimore 1979).

What archaeology has begun to reveal is material evidence of the period of Seleucid and later Greek rule (not always easy to distinguish), before almost totally lacking: traces of the hellenistic levels of strategically placed cities, fortresses, fortified villages, and, in some cases, new foundations. Thus a 'growth' of some sort emerges, hitherto invisible. At two places, right on the major arteries of communication, namely Balkh, the modern name of ancient Bactra, and Termez (Termita: the western crossing point of the Oxus, two stages north of Bactra), hellenistic material has been excavated. A coin hoard from the site of Airtam, 18 km north of Termez, is said to date to the period before the reign of Demetrius of Bactria (189-167). The two oldest stages of the wall of Balkh are 'probably' of the Seleucid period (Balkh I and Balkh IA): remains of a hellenistic period wall have also

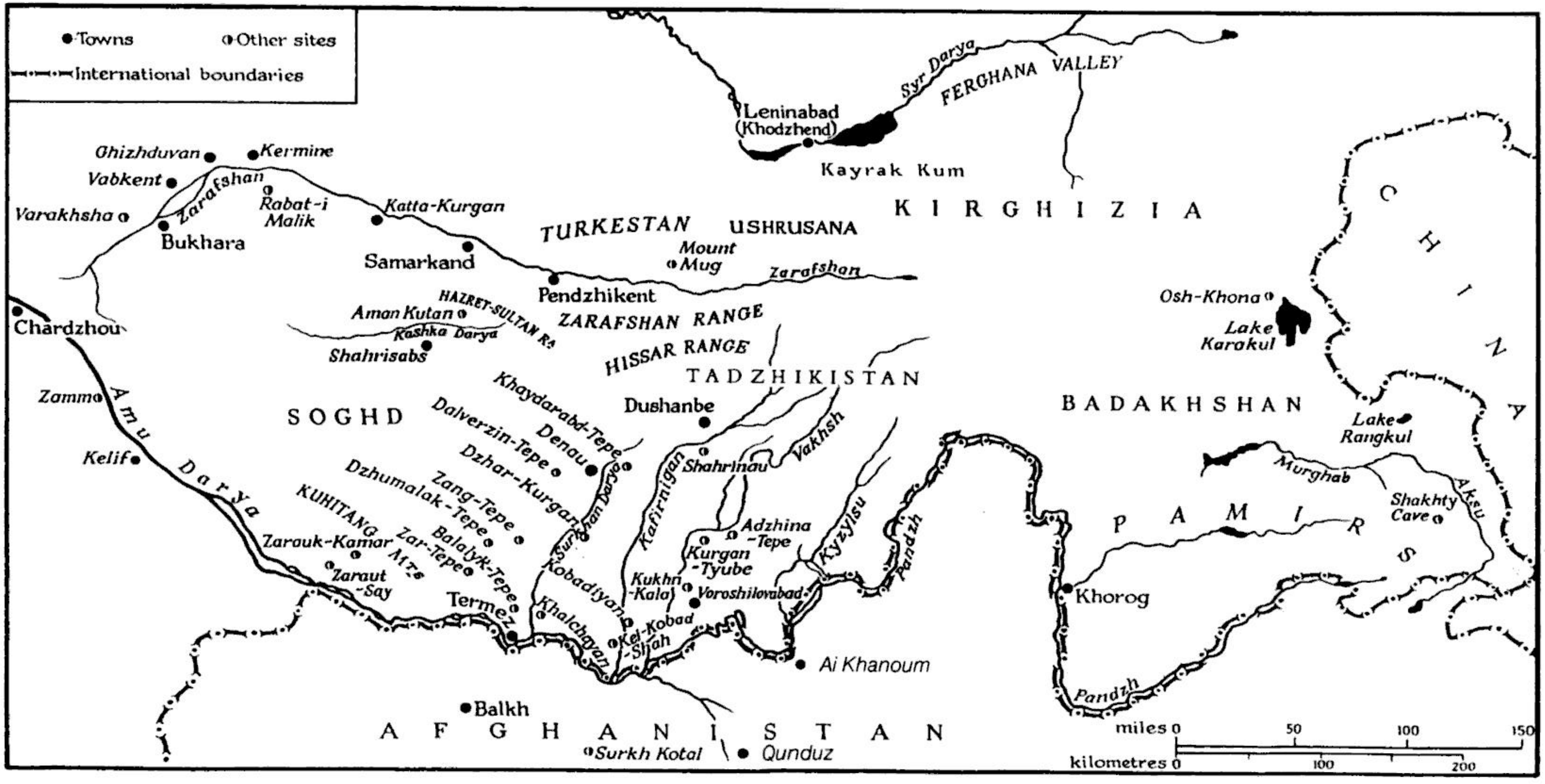


Fig. 6. Bactria-Sogdiana (after Knobloch 1972).

been found on the northern limit of the huge oasis of ancient Bactra, itself strongly fortified (Engels 1978, 98 n. 113; cf. Francfort 1988, 186). Termez was an important Kushan site and later a famous Islamic city. Before 1975 the date of the Greek occupation, based on coin finds, was placed in the reign of the Greek-Bactrian kings, Diodotus and Euthydemus I. New probes in 1975, in the citadel by the Oxus, reached the first level of Greek occupation, where the pottery paralleled that of Ai Khanoum (see p. 178). This level lay a metre deep, and like the earliest level of Ai Khanoum was on virgin soil. The exploration was very limited, so no precise dating of this first level emerged, but the indications were around the time of, or later than, Diodotus – in other words, the foundation could have taken place either under Seleucid rule or under the Bactrian kingdom.

As well as the hellenistic sites near Termez (perhaps an Antioch: Bernard 1982d, 236 n. 54) and Bactra, archaeologists have been able to identify the following as main sites in the hellenistic period: Qunduz (Drapsaca/Adrapsa: Bernard 1975, 65 n. 11), some 65 km from Ai Khanoum, separated only by hills from it (for references cf. Engels 1978, 97 n. 111 and 99 n. 2); on the river Qunduz, Shahr-i-Banu, where hellenistic pottery has been found; Khulm (?ancient Aornos); and Khisht Tepe on the river Oxus, 90 km north-west of Qunduz on the ancient caravan route. These 'scraps' of evidence gave Bernard the impression of a line of Greek garrisons guarding the north marches of Bactria, which may well prove to be correct. The idea would then be of strong fortification from the centre against attacks.

The further question then arises, where was the 'centre' of Seleucid Bactria? Bernard is the excavator of Ai Khanoum (for this see below pp. 178-9). He found there Seleucid coinage down to the period of Seleucus II, both silver and bronze for local use; in addition equipment for minting coins, of the Seleucid period, has also been found. This has led Bernard to suggest that Ai Khanoum, not Bactra (as Newell believed), was the seat of the royal mint of Bactria and, by implication, a 'capital', though there is no evidence that there was only one royal mint per satrapy. What is perhaps more important is the combination of all these finds to reinforce a picture of the Seleucids' activity in this province in the period from Seleucus I to the reign of Antiochus II (cf. Briant 1990).

Transoxiana and beyond

There is no evidence (cf. above p. 103) that the region known as Sogdiana, embracing the area between the Middle Oxus and the river Jaxartes (Syr Darya), was a separate satrapy under the Seleucids – although the mind boggles at its size (see Fig. 6). That the Seleucids saw the northern reaches of this area as an intermediary and outer

zone is to some extent suggested by the tradition of Antiochus I's refoundation of Alexandria Eschate = 'Outermost Alexandria' (in the traditional way of rulers of this area, cf. Cyrus the Great and Alexander) – as a new Antioch, described as a 'yoke' (*zeugos*) on the neck of the Scythians (Q.C. VII 7,1). It should be noted that the term '*zeugos*' is ambiguous – meaning both a 'yoke' and also 'marriage', therefore emphasising the basic meaning of a link. So the connotations of the word are not totally negative (see above p. 15, for the discussion of Zeugma on the Euphrates). This new Antioch has been identified with the archaeological site of Khodzhend (Leninabad), the earliest strata of which are Seleucid.

The chief town of Achaemenid Sogdiana was Marakanda (Samarkhand), in the valley of the river Zarafshan, which had been the base of Alexander's hard-fought campaigns in the region. According to literary sources, it had at that time a fortified citadel dominating a walled city of 70 stades (Q.C. VII 6,10), while its designation as the 'royal residence of the region' (Arrian *Anab.* III 30,6) implies the presence of an Achaemenid palace there. Its continued occupation under the Seleucids is reflected in the archaeological site Afrasiab (near modern Samarkhand), where hellenistic pottery from levels II-III was originally described as 'Greek-Bactrian' (Masson 1982, 95-100; Knobloch 1972, 111). The precise date of the hellenistic remains, including typical Greek pottery shapes, building techniques similar to those at Ai Khanoum, a coin of Antiochus II and a short Greek inscription on a vase fragment, now seems more likely to be earlier, and Bernard (1985, 139) has presented strong arguments in favour of the existence of a Greek colony at this nodal point for ancient trade routes and strategic control of the region (see now also Bernard/Grenet/Isamiddinov 1990, 358-70).

The river valleys of the tributaries of the river Oxus (the Surkhan Darya, Qizil Su, Kafirnijan, Kokcha, Vahsh), back to the mountain ranges of the Hissar and Pamirs, had, as archaeology shows, been the zones of settlement for the population; however, the climate made irrigation, not dry farming, the vital mode of agriculture. A map, blank before the Second World War, is gradually being filled in, dotted with new sites: a town, Kei-Kobad Shah (south Tadzhikistan), on the outskirts of the modern town, founded in the third or second century and continuing to the fourth or fifth century AD, measuring about 310 × 410 metres, with a wall of rectangular bricks and a variety of symbols including many letters of the Greek alphabet has been found (cf. Belenitsky 1968, 75). It had rectangular towers at regular intervals, forming part of the fortification walls, which were straight with gates in the middle; inside, streets served to divide the town into separate rectangular districts on an apparently uniform plan (for the pottery see Belenitsky 1968, pls. 3-9).

Other sites in the region include Khalchayan, on the Surkhan-Darya; the earliest levels of this town go back to the fourth century, and it developed into a huge fortress by the first century. Zir Tepe, which is located 26 km north-west of Termez, has yielded Greek Bactrian coins and pottery of the third and second century. Sarksanchur, in the region of Parhar, in southern Tadzhikistan, was on the Qizil Su and dates from the second century on. Kobadiyan (modern Mikoyanabad), in the Kafirnijan valley, is described as a 'town' of the third to first century by the excavators. Another site that might be dated to the same period is Kukna Kala (near Voroshilovad). Tepe-i Shah (near the left bank of the Kafirnijan, north of Khisht-Tepe) begins in the second century. The major site in the Greek-Kushan period was the newly discovered Dal'verzin-tepe (Uzbekistan), where no Achaemenid period material was found. Settlement here seems only to have begun in the third century, with the installation of 'Greeks' in Bactria, on virgin soil (see below). Here was built a fortified town, with an upper and lower city, beginning as a small settlement (Bernard 1980b).

The existence, before Alexander, of fortified towns in the region has been confirmed by excavation, e.g. Bandykhan Tepe, Kyzyl Tepe, Talashkan Tepe: massive sites, easily exceeding fifteen hectares in area, all date from the seventh to fourth centuries. Surveys and excavations in south Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan show that more were built in the hellenistic period, ranging from small fortified villages to towns and large oasis cities, heavily fortified, perhaps rather like Ai Khanoum. These were placed on routes, in cultivated, irrigated locations. Whether one can call this 'growth' depends on many factors, most of them uncertain, about the continuation of 'old' sites, but there seems little doubt that cities, including in some cases a palace (Kalaly Gyr), a monumental building (Kjuzeli Gyr), a citadel (Talashkan Tepe), and all well-fortified, existed before Alexander, and continued as socio-economic and cultural foci afterwards (see Fig. 7; cf. further Kuzmina 1976; Sarianidi 1977; Francfort 1988, 183-9).

The revolt of Bactria

By the early 230s, on any chronology, all are agreed that a separate kingdom, claiming independence from the ruler Seleucus II, had been created by a Greek named Diodotus, who took the title *basileus* (king), a satrap who had usurped royal power. The chronology – tied (by inadequate sources) to revolt and to an invasion of Parthia (cf. above p. 87) – presents a mess hardly capable of being unravelled. The 'high' chronology sets secession in the early 240s, before the dynastic split between Seleucus II and his brother Antiochus Hierax; the lower chronology sets the revolt later (239/8). This boils down to a 'choice'

between a time when Seleucus was facing invasion from Ptolemy III, or a time of internal upheaval ('the War of the Brothers'). Another approach is to see it as a product of 'neglect' by Antiochus II (and his immediate successors) of the eastern provinces; according to this the main focus of Seleucid power was in the west. This latter solution will not do. First, it is based upon an argument *a silentio*; secondly, there is evidence of Seleucus II's personal, and therefore important, action in the east, for example against the Parthians; furthermore, there is Antiochus II's appointment of a satrap of Parthia and his rulings for Babylonia (van der Spek 1986, 241-8 (= no. 11); Falkenstein 1941, 4-5). There is no particular reason to suppose that a decision to face Ptolemy's threats, which seems to have been given priority, meant that 'the east' was neglected. The wars of the Seleucids elsewhere may have provided an opportunity but that is not to say that they caused secession. But what sort of factors may have played a part in the secession?

The Successors saw the region of Bactria as a ripe plum, because of its reputed wealth and resources of manpower as a base for expansion – it was *not* seen as 'the back of beyond' (cf. D.S. XVIII 7, where it is described as the base for controlling the Upper Satrapies; Plutarch *Dem*. 46, noting Demetrius' plan to carve out a kingdom for himself based on Media and regions east). The joint kingship of Seleucus I and Antiochus was linked directly to Antiochus I's energetic activity in this region (cf. Plutarch *Dem*. 46). It is likely to have been the case that any Bactrian satrap was aware of the possibility of secession if he established a concordat with the Bactrian inhabitants, as Seleucus had in Babylonia. That individual ambition played a part is indeed probable, but seems insufficient as an explanation. Anti-Macedonian or pro-Greek elements (Wolski 1977) are not incredible given the massacres of Alexander's first settlers by Macedonian soldiers, even if these were not as total as claimed in the sources (Narain 1957; Bevan 1902, 286-7). We are not in a position to guess whether the local population had a 'better' deal under the Greek-Bactrians than under the Seleucids, but we can perhaps say that the old idea underlying this view, that the Seleucids were operating an anti-Iranian exclusion policy (e.g. Will and see further below) is wrong, so this approach is suspect. Rostovtzeff 1941, Will 1979-82 and Wolski 1982 tend, in general terms, to see in Bactria an exceptional symbiosis engendered by the threat of Scythian nomad tribes beyond the frontiers of the Seleucid empire (primarily beyond the Syr Darya). The idea of some sort of agreement between ruled and new rulers would follow an earlier pattern: see, for example, Antigonus' retention of Stasanor as satrap of Bactria, and of Tlepolemos in Carmania, 'because it was not easy to remove them by letter since their administration had been good with regard to the local inhabitants and they had many supporters'

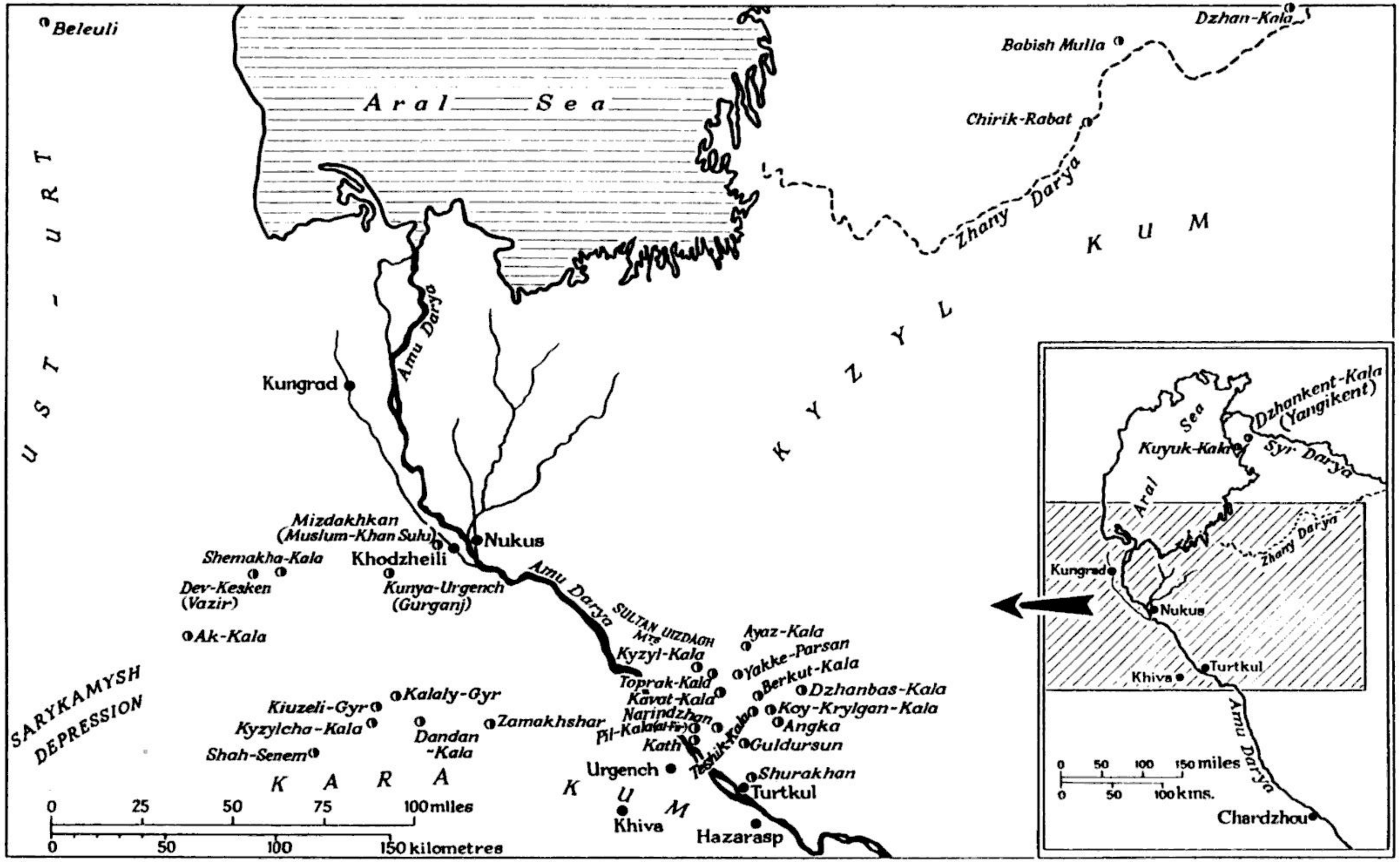


Fig. 7. Chorasmia (after Knobloch 1972).

(D.S. XIX 48,1). The process may have been comparable to that of Seleucus I in Babylonia, who used the resources and power of his position as satrap to form the basis of what was to be built into a kingdom in the end. There is no evidence of a 'Bactrian' independence movement, any more than in the Achaemenid period (cf. Briant 1984), because no single Bactrian 'nation' existed – that would be an anachronism.

As to the question of the eventual secession of Bactria from the Seleucid kingdom, which, it should be noted, was not final until the second century, many scholars see a sort of external pressure for its lasting in the supposed consequences of what is seen as a total cut-off from the Seleucid empire by Parthia. But this view is untenable: there was no impenetrable barrier erected between these regions (see above pp. 79-89) – traders were passing from Bactria to Parthia, from Parthia to Iran and Mesopotamia; economic and cultural interplay between places under Seleucid rule and the mainstream Greek world, evident in the material finds, and places under non-Greek rule (e.g. Arachosia under the Mauryas), is attested in sculpture (imports), pottery, jewellery and epigraphy. The idea of an Iron Curtain descending is anachronistic and out of keeping with practical realities, such as the impossibility of total surveillance of routes across 'political' frontiers. It is an argument *a silentio* in as much as there is a total vacuum of evidence on diplomatic relations between the Seleucid empire and Parthia and Bactria, while there *is* evidence of intercourse in terms of goods (trade) and culture. Secondly, it misconstrues the gradual course and nature of the impact of the Parthians' capture of Parthyene and of their *temporary* incursions into Hyrcania, which could not cut the link with north-east Iran, i.e. the routes from Iran to the eastern satrapies. Only in the course of the second century did the Parthians gain control of the southern side of the Elburz mountains (see above p. 89), winning control of the Caspian Gates (the 'keys of the earth of Asia', *ap*. Isidore of Charax), and begin territorially to occupy it by settlement. The route to the still Seleucid provinces of Margiana and Aria, and so to Drangiana, was reachable from south of the Elburz, via Meshed and Herat, or, with more difficulty, via Carmania.

A second, external danger has been conjured up to 'explain' secession in the spectre of 'a powerful Chorasmian state' north-east of the Seleucid empire (see Fig. 7) at the north end of the river Amu Darya. Much is uncertain here, since we know of no single ruler or unified empire in the sources. While archaeology has shown urbanisation from the seventh century in the oases and river valleys, and therefore a sedentary population existed, the political structure is a blank, the concept of a powerful state a figment (cf. Briant 1984, 23ff. for excellent critique). What there is evidence of in this area is Greek artifacts and Greek influence in art from sites showing that contacts existed beyond

areas under direct Greek-Macedonian rule (Ghirshman 1962; Will 1979, 269). While to the Greeks of the 'old Greek world' this area may have remained the 'back of beyond' it does not seem to have been so to those nearer at hand.

Social and economic structures

Despite new finds, does Rostovtzeff's dictum of 1941 (I 543) still hold: 'We should like to know more of the economic and social structure of the immense and rich kingdom of Bactria, but there is practically no evidence about it'? Light begins to dawn in the second century at Ai Khanoum (Rapin 1982). But before this, it is easier to pose questions than to answer them. What of the population? How large was it? What, ethnically, was its composition?

Welles, writing before the archaeological discoveries of 'Greek' town sites, such as Ai Khanoum, of other large Bactrian sites, as well as of smaller ones, quite rightly protested and questioned the rather idealised (and culture-biased) versions of, for example, Tarn who saw Alexander's supposed policy of 'fusion' applied uniquely here. Welles stated that the kings of Bactria were only a line of 'white rajahs, ruling by tact and ability rather than architects of a new policy of racial harmony – actually few Greeks came to this relatively inaccessible and outlandish country. What right have we to assume that the Greeks in Bactria were anything more than a very small group ruling by force of tradition and their own abilities among Iranian barons and native peasantry, comparable to some modern English rajahs, and would have been removed with as little permanent trace of foreign influence?' (Welles 1950). Welles thus proposed the model of British Indian colonialism in which there was a hierarchy of the rulers at the top of the pyramid, peasants at the bottom, with landowning 'locals' in between.

Whatever the ethnic proportion of the population of Ai Khanoum, three facts are clear for the third to second centuries: first, an intensified population density in the area (see the increased number of hellenistic sites attested from surveys and from excavation, though here we have to be careful); secondly, increased exploitation of land at Ai Khanoum, shown in the extension there of the irrigation system which is comparable to the alleged increase in vine cultivation in Susiana attributed to the Macedonians by Strabo (XV 3,11) and the possible efforts to intensify the use of land on the small island of Failaka (Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985); thirdly, the physical growth of Ai Khanoum (see for example, the enormous expansion of the palace there: below Fig. 8). Who actually lived at Ai Khanoum we cannot really say yet. A powerful group must have occupied the 'big' houses excavated there (see below Fig. 11), but whether the labourers lived in

outlying villages, we simply do not know. Another tricky piece of 'evidence' is the later third-century Greek theatre, with a seating capacity of six thousand, which need not necessarily represent the size of the population living in the city. However, it is evident also from the finds at Kandahar that more Greeks were present in this area than had been visible before, and this raises some doubts about the thoroughness of the Successors' attempts to exterminate rebels in Bactria.

The ancient Greek sources, going back to the hellenistic period, billed the Greek-Bactrian kings as rulers of 'a thousand cities'. Here a boast is being made in that the many villages of Bactria, including fortified ones, are called 'cities', and it should be stressed that these villages are not differentiated from *poleis*, which in Greece could be very small. However, it would suggest that, in the limited areas where settled life was possible, places organised as communities and recognised as such by Greeks existed in great numbers. This very much recalls other areas in the Seleucid empire, for example the socio-economic pattern of the Iranian region of Rhagae, which had two thousand villages according to Posidonius (in Strabo XI 9,1). Indeed 56,000 villiages have been counted in modern Iran. We may remember also the four hundred villages plundered by the Roman general, Murena, in Cappadocia (Appian *Mithr.* 9.65). Concentration on the large number of settled communities under the rule of the central authority and the perception of this as a reflection of power are not misplaced. The reality was that 'villages', like other organised communities, functioned as fiscal units and units of production, of great importance to the crown.

In Bactria, as elsewhere in the Seleucid empire, space was also found for the land-holdings and *oikoi* of the cavalry. It has traditionally been accepted that the eight thousand cavalry (a record in terms of the size of cavalry forces in ancient warfare) reputedly produced on the field by Euthydemus against Antiochus III, were recruited from local people settled in the area. This is the basis of the symbiosis view (see above p. 108). In fact this is not peculiar to Bactria, but is found throughout the Seleucid empire (cf. pp. 55-7; 78).

We are thus opposed to the views of several scholars that the reason for the Seleucids' failure in the eastern regions was their inability to solve two problems: first, that of the administration of satrapies at a great distance and their defence; secondly, the (bad) relations of the rulers with the colonised. Neither of these explanations can be accepted. The first is true of all empires and has nothing specifically to do with Seleucid policy as such: maintaining control over a great distance is always a problem for imperial rulers; the second should simply be rejected as the evidence does not support it (for more discussion see below pp. 120-5). There is no evidence that Bactria and

other 'upper satrapies' were perceived as, in some sense, more peripheral to Seleucid interests and more difficult to deal with than, for example, Asia Minor; while Seleucid rule had to accommodate itself to a specific complex of existing socio-economic patterns and local cultural traditions, nothing suggests that this was an unusual political problem demanding, and resulting in, a unique solution.

CHAPTER FIVE

Kings and Kingship

This chapter addresses common features of practical kingship and, against that background, debates some of the basic problems in approaching 'hellenistic' kingship. For example, apart from the question of the character of kingship after Alexander, how may one distinguish between the institutional aspects of kingship, and what they were, and the king as an individual human being, a split known in European medieval theory as the 'King's Two Bodies' (note the use of the royal plural in formal addresses by the kings, cf. Sherwin-White 1985, 84 n. 2)? The chapter also examines royal ideology and its expression in dynastic art, architecture and cult, media through which hellenistic rulers sought to add, *inter alia*, a superman dimension to the military basis of their power. It is imperative to avoid any impression that an identical model of kingship operated throughout the hellenistic world; how could this be true of dynasties controlling such diverse empires as those of Egypt and of the Seleucid empire, with such different economic, geographical and social systems to rule and to which to adapt? The small kingdom of the Attalids is radically different from both of these major dynasties in the basically civilian model of their publicised style of rule (cf. the eulogy of Attalos, Polyb. XVIII 41; Austin 199).

Formulating kingship

What main transformations did Alexander's legacy bring? First, kingship (*basileia*). Alexander's own monarchy established a model of kingship which the Successors and later hellenistic kings consciously developed and shaped to build their own regimes into enduring political systems (cf. Errington 1976). The novelty, from the Greek viewpoint, of Alexander's *basileia* is well seen in the description of the magnificent funeral carriage constructed at Babylon to convey Alexander's body back to the royal burial ground at Aegae in Macedon. Hieronymus, soldier and contemporary historian, originally wrote a description of this astonishing wonder in his history (Athen. V 40,

p. 206 DE) on which the surviving description in Diodorus (XVIII 26,1-28,1) probably, directly or indirectly, depends (cf. Hornblower 1981, 43ff.). The carriage was of an eastern type, a *harmamaxa* (see Kurtz/Boardman 1981, 304ff., fig. 76), built up with a gold vaulted ceiling supported on Ionic columns over a rectangular compartment hung with thick gold net decorated on each side with four embroidered(?) pictures. The first picture portrayed Alexander sitting on a chariot holding a gorgeous sceptre, symbol since Homer of royal legitimacy and of divine favour (*Iliad* II 203-6), surrounded by a double bodyguard of armed Macedonians and the royal Persian guard, the *melophoroi*, with armed soldiers in the foreground. The other three panels portrayed the military might of the empire; the war elephants arrayed for battle, carrying Indian mahouts and Macedonian soldiers, a theme more familiar to the twentieth century from Indian and Islamic art than from Greek, where only rare hellenistic silver plates (see Plate 2), coins and terracottas reflect the original popularity of this new theme after Alexander; next, detachments of cavalry in battle formation; and lastly, the fleet prepared for war. This contemporary image of imperial power, incorporating a Macedonian and non-Greek element under the unique control of a sceptre-bearing (and so legitimate) *basileus*, encapsulates what were to be three characteristic features of the new hellenistic monarchies: as military states, supra-Greek and ruled by, apparently, legally constituted and divinely favoured kings, not conquistadors.

Dead, Alexander remained a potent force in the world of the contending Successors – who could apparently be invoked at critical moments to win support for important military campaigns and for claims to kingship. In 312 Seleucus stiffened the resolve of his 'Friends', who were rightly appalled by the small size of the cavalry and infantry (eight hundred or a thousand soldiers; two hundred or three hundred cavalry) gathered to recover by force the satrapy of Babylonia, by deploying rational argument and charismatic sanctions:

> When Seleucus saw that they were terror-stricken, he encouraged them, saying that men who had campaigned with Alexander and had been advanced by him because of their prowess ought not to rely solely on armed force and wealth when confronting difficult situations, but upon experience and skill, the means whereby Alexander himself had accomplished his great and universally admired deeds. He added that they ought also to believe the oracles of the gods which had foretold that the end of his campaign would be worthy of his purpose; for, when he had consulted the oracle in Branchidae, the god had greeted him as King Seleucus, and Alexander standing beside him in a dream had given him a clear sign of the future leadership that was destined to fall to him in the course of time. (D.S. XIX 90,3-5)

Here Seleucus recalled that soldiers of Alexander should rely on their

experience and skill (or, as we would say, professionalism), the two qualities which had pre-eminently won Alexander his great conquests. Then he added that Alexander had personally intimated Seleucus' future hegemony in a dream. The oracular roles and epiphanies assigned to Alexander in the stories circulating about the Successors (Eumenes in 321: D.S. XVIII 60,4-61,3; Seleucus in 312; Seleucus and Lysimachus in 301: Plutarch *Dem*. 29; Pyrrhos in 284: Plutarch *Pyr*. 11) and the talismanic powers ascribed to Alexander's corpse (D.S. XVIII 28,2-6) are unique to the period. No other hellenistic monarch, not even the founders of the new Macedonian-Greek kingdoms, is ascribed this kind of charismatic power in the perception of contemporaries.

It is uncertain how far these stories can be termed propaganda in the strict sense of a centrally orchestrated and disseminated 'message' directed at winning the support of a particular audience (*pace* Hadley 1969; 1974) because our knowledge of their transmission and circulation is so uncertain. The modern critical approach to the use of coinage as propaganda in the Roman empire (cf., for example, Jones 1956/1974; Crawford 1983) emphasises the total lack of evidence for the emperor's personal interest in, or control of, coin types to say nothing of the different matter of their failure to make an impact. This scepticism should be borne in mind in the study of hellenistic royal coinages where the king's role in the choice of coin types for different royal mints scattered, in the case of the Seleucid empire, at widely separated locations is unclear, though probably to be assumed at times (cf. above pp. 23; 28; for freedom of choice at local level, cf. Bernard/Guillaume 1980). One common factor, however, running through these stories about Alexander, and underlying certain of the posthumous coin types with Alexander's head, is the existing belief in his divine status.

In retrospect Alexander's reign is recognisable as a watershed in the development of 'ruler cults' as a characteristic and visible feature of the impact of monarchy in the Greek world. By the end of the fourth century civic cults for the Successors had been established in numerous Greek *poleis*. Their spread is clearly a response to the spread of monarchic power even if major problems still remain in understanding their contemporary function and meanings (cf. Price 1980; 1984, 23-40). These cults were distinctive in being voluntary, established by the Greek cities on their own initiative without direct orders from a dynast or king. They are distinguished from another category of ruler cult, namely the cults instituted, organised and imposed by the kings within the boundaries of their kingdom for past kings of their ruling dynasty and for themselves. This latter type of ruler cult begins only in the second generation of monarchy in the Ptolemaic kingdom; and even later in the Seleucid empire. The former

type of ruler cult is called civic ruler cult in this book in contradistinction to the centrally imposed and organised state ruler cults. The two are related but distinct phenomena both stimulated by Alexander. Alexander's personal sense of his superhuman qualities, whether or not inspired by awareness of his superman achievements, is seen in his own belief in filiation from Zeus Ammon and reflected in the encouragement at court of an iconographical tradition which celebrated in masterpieces of painting and sculpture the king's affinity with the gods (Bieber 1964; Goukowsky 1978, 60-6). Alexander's request for divine cult from mainland Greek cities (Dinarchus, *c.Dem.* 1,94; Hyperides, *Or.fun.* 21; *c.Dem.* 31-2; Timaeus, *FGrH* 566 F155; cf. Badian 1981), such as Athens, can be seen as part of the same self-vision. The political ends which directed ruler cult could serve become clearer after Alexander's death. Eumenes of Cardia, who, as a Greek, faced particular hostility from the Macedonian commanders of the veteran Silver Shields in 318, allocated to fight under him, solved the problem of how to establish his authority and win their co-operation in this way:

> He said that in his sleep he had seemed to see Alexander the king, alive and dressed in his royal costume, presiding over a council, giving orders to the commanders and actively administering all the affairs of the monarchy. 'Therefore,' he said, 'I think that we must make ready a golden throne from the royal treasure, and that after the diadem, the sceptre, the crown, and the rest of the insignia have been placed upon it, all the commanders must at daybreak offer incense to Alexander before it, hold the meetings of the council in its presence, and receive their orders in the name of the king just as if he were alive and at the head of his own kingdom.' (D.S. XVIII 60; cf. Plutarch *Eum.* 13)

The tent was set up; inside was placed an empty throne with the symbols of kingship upon it and an altar where the officers made offerings and performed *proskynesis* to Alexander 'as to a god' before getting down to business. For Eumenes the proposal was a ploy to win authority. But the point of interest is that it only worked because of the belief among the Macedonian officers in the divinity of Alexander. The passage could be used to point ahead to the kings' later establishment of imperial cults specifically as instruments to forge cohesion and reinforce loyalism among soldiers and civilians (cf. below p. 210). The publicised value system, which unsurprisingly admits no ulterior political motives, is expressed in the copies of Antiochus III's own edict adding the cult of his queen, Laodice, to that of his *progonoi* and himself (cf. the copy from Laodicea in Media, 193: Robert 1949, 5ff.; Austin 158; quoted below p. 204). The cult was a *time* (honour) for the recipient in recognition of religious piety and for devotion as the king's

wife. There is no sign that a motive behind these imperial cults was legitimation of the king as such.

At face value the official formulation supports those who see the imperial ruler cult merely as a dimension of politics, basically non-religious in objective and practice. At a simple level the Eumenes story warns against the latter part of the equation. The motives and attitudes of individual kings are rarely intimated so that it is difficult to test the political interpretation of the attitude of the monarch. But it would be wrong to take the scepticism of Eumenes as the invariable mentality (cf. Price 1984). Alexander plainly was not the only hellenistic monarch to see himself as a kind of superman; it is probably no coincidence that the major organisation of the Seleucid imperial cult was the work of the sixth king, Antiochus III the Great, so-named after his own *anabasis* through Persia to Bactria and the frontier with India when he successfully reasserted imperial control of the Seleucid territories in the east (see below pp. 197-9). At the end of the hellenistic period, in the small kingdom of Commagene in north Syria, the vast sculptures at Nemrud Dagh and the surviving cult centres of the king, Antiochus I (*c.* 70 – *c.* 35), there and at Arsameia on Nymphaios, built for his dynastic cult and himself as 'God Righteous and Manifest', and the inscriptions articulating the ritual organisation and genesis of the royal cult, reveal a ruler 'in the grip of a vision whose devastating power and unity can be sensed in everything he touched. Sculpture, architecture, the use of natural features, the ordering of the cult, speak with the same voice as the inscriptions, of a man possessed by the dissonant tongues of Persia and Greece, and dedicated to the service of five outlandish demons (*sic*) – Zeus-Oromasdes, Apollo-Mithras, Helios-Hermes, Artagnes-Heracles-Ares, his beloved Commagene, and himself' (Murray 1966, 108).

These new Macedonian monarchic states have been thought to introduce a new type of kingship, often described as 'personal monarchy'.[1] This view usually distinguishes 'hellenistic monarchy' from the 'traditional' monarchies of Greece, such as Macedon and Epirus, where monarchy had both a territorial identity and a 'national' character. With the exception of the kings ruling Macedon, the new monarchies were not dependent upon any one single territory or ethnic group. Beyond this latter distinction there is no real difference from Macedonian kingship. The idea that Macedonian monarchy was a limited autocracy is a modern myth, now exploded (Errington 1978; Lévy 1978; Borza 1990, 231-48). There were no institutional limitations, as in the case of Spartan kingship, on the king's power; an overlegalistic approach conjured up an imaginary constitutional role

[1] Initially, Granier 1931; cf. Aymard 1948; followed by many, e.g. Will 1975. For a recent (unconvincing) attempt to restate the notion of a Macedonian state separate from the king, see Moren 1983; cf. Hammond 1989, 166-77.

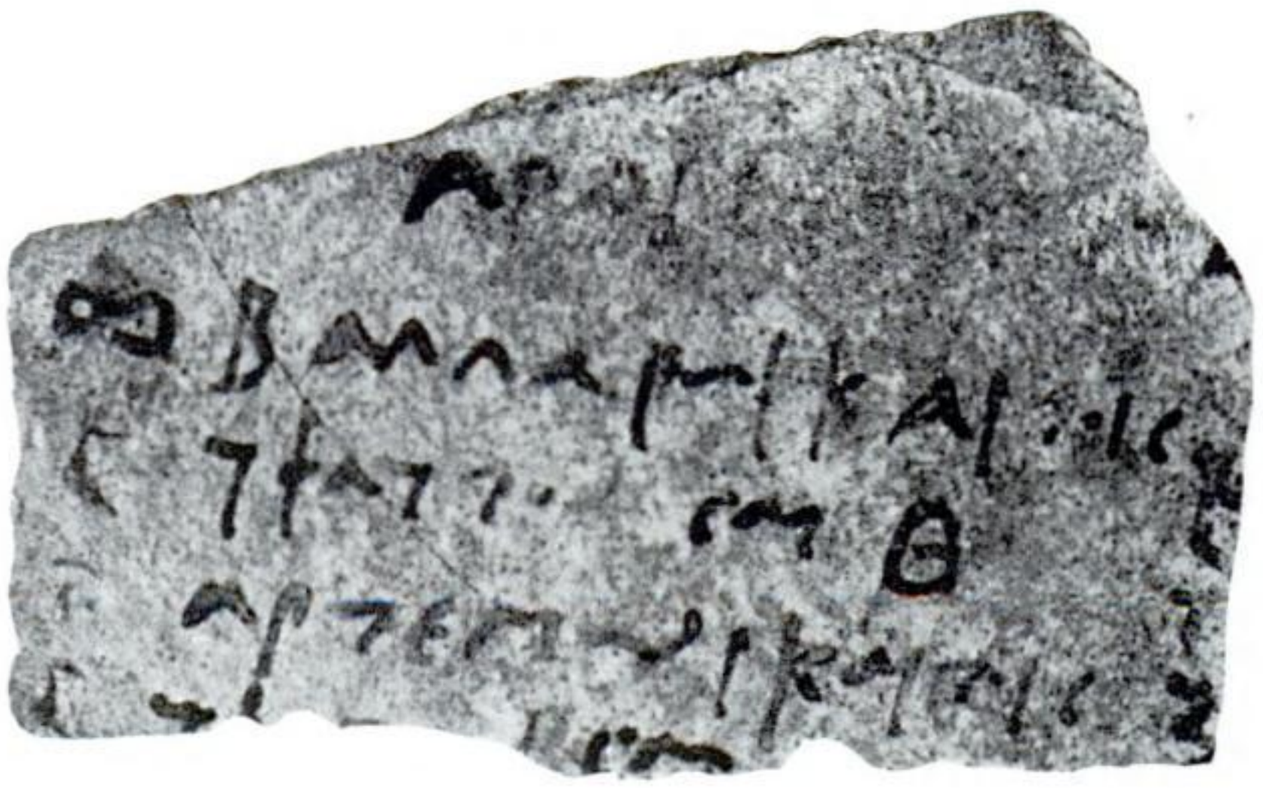
1. Impression of an early hellenistic gem, with an Aramaic inscription, illustrating the Celtic warrior practice, *trimarkisia*.

2. *Below:* Gilded silver dish with relief of warriors on an elephant.

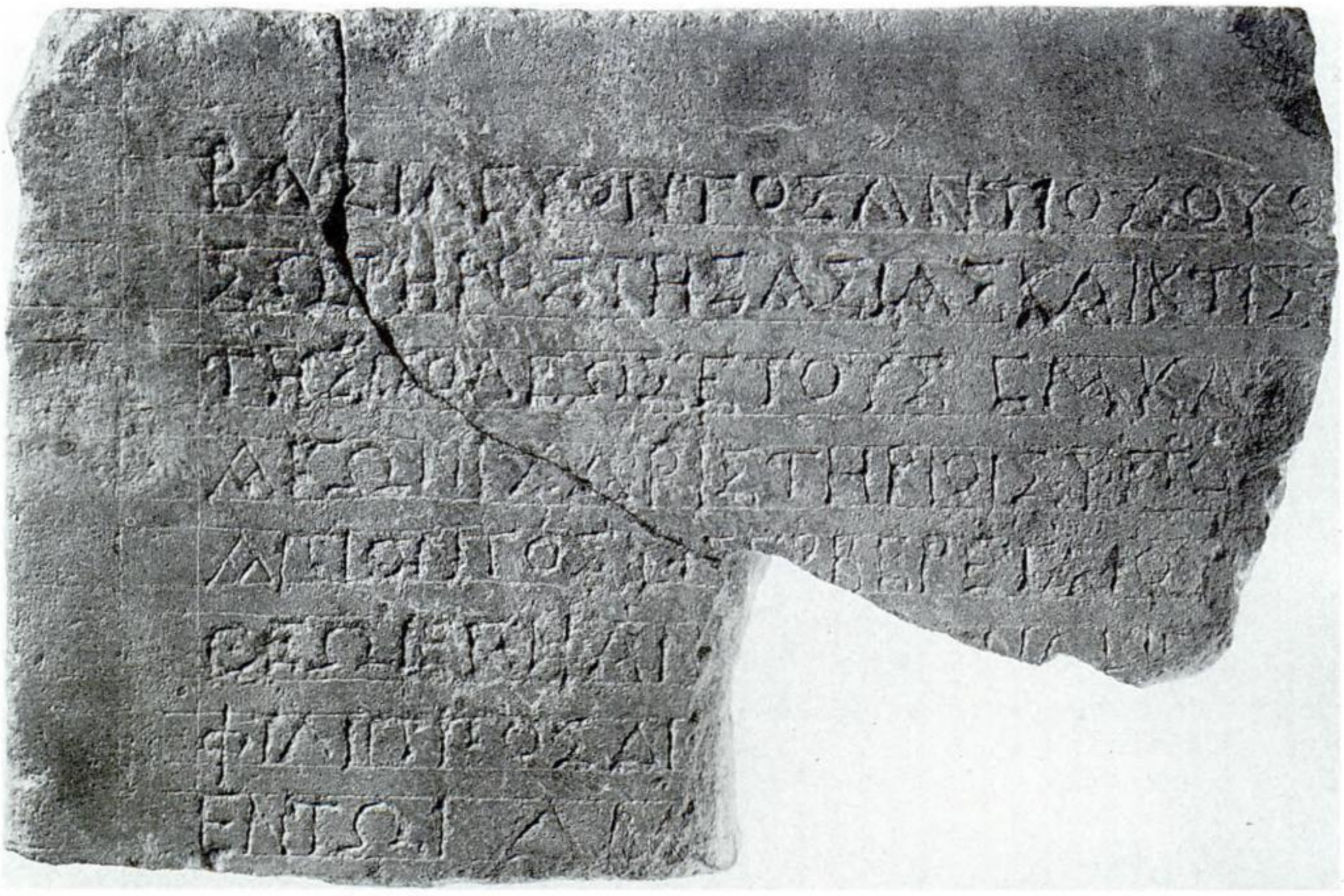
3. Portrait of Seleucus III on a *bulla* from Uruk.

4. *Right:* Gem showing Alexander the Great, with ram's horns and a diadem, and a (?)Kharoshti inscription.

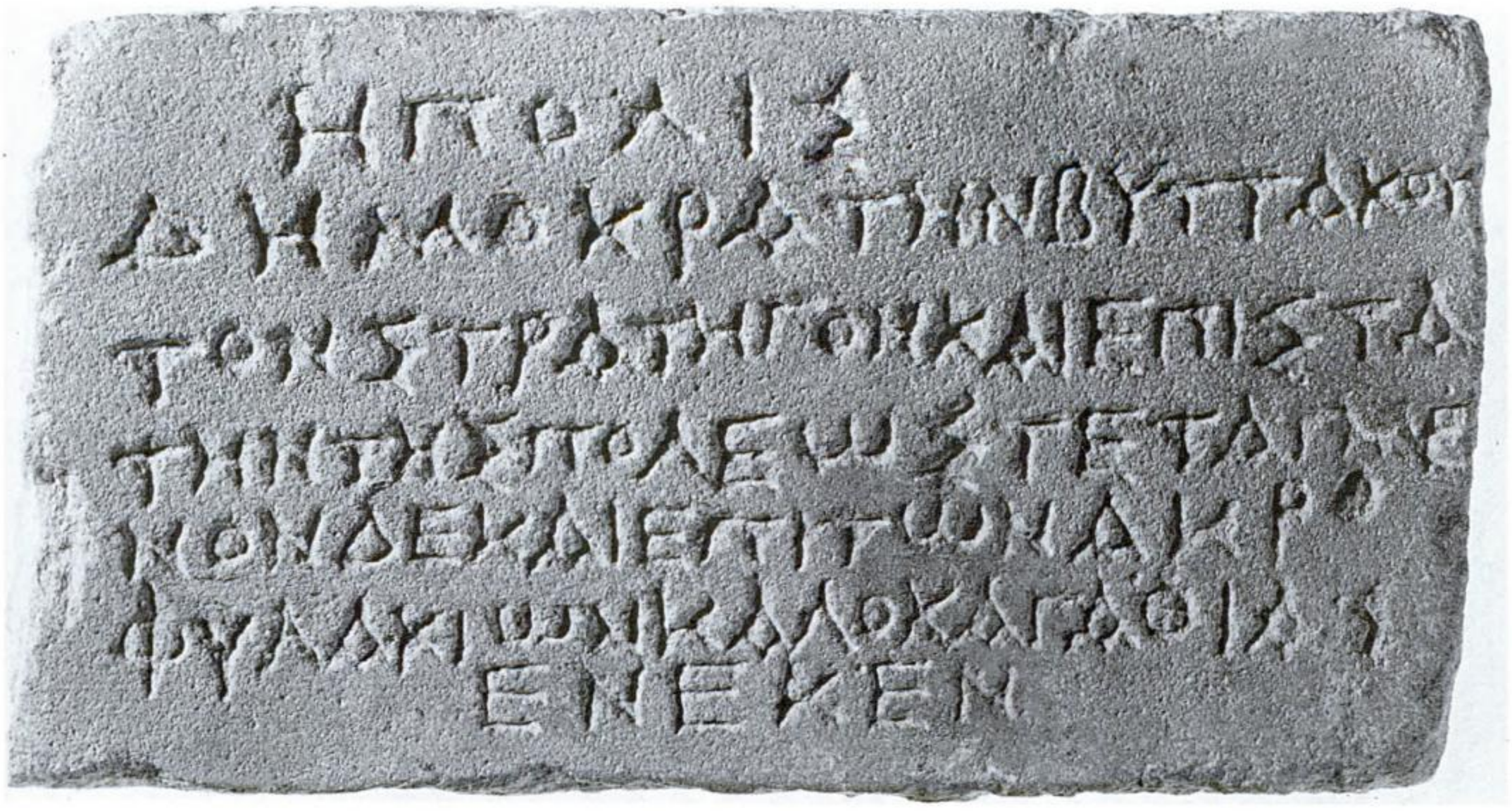
5. *Bulla* from Uruk with seal impressions; reign of Seleucus III.



6. Greek *ostrakon* from Babylon (*c.* 275), attesting the presence of a Seleucid garrison.

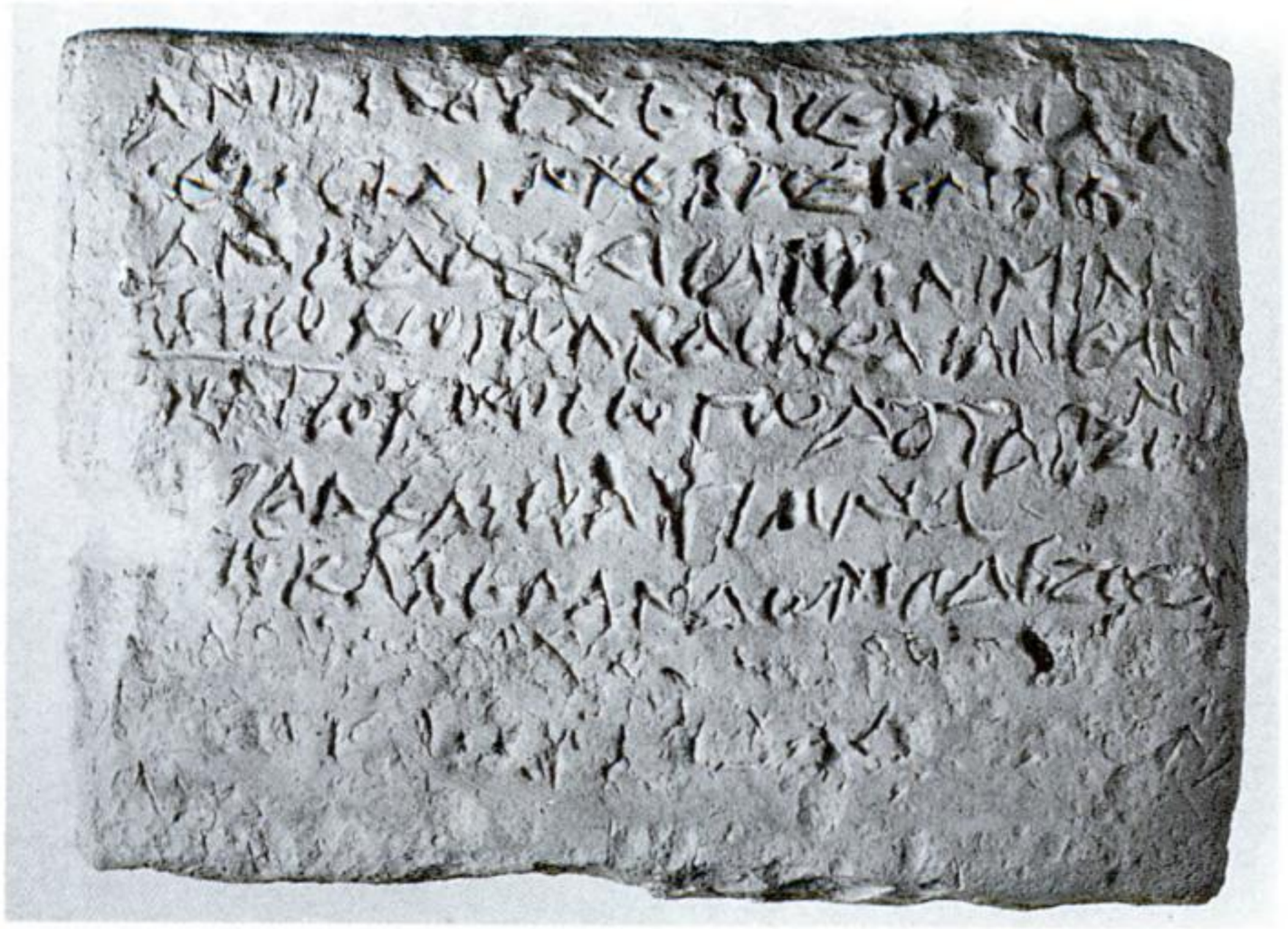


7. Dedication to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who is named as *the*[*os*], *soter* of Asia and founder of the *polis*. From Babylonia: either Babylon, Seleucia-Tigris, or one of the other Seleucid foundations in this area.



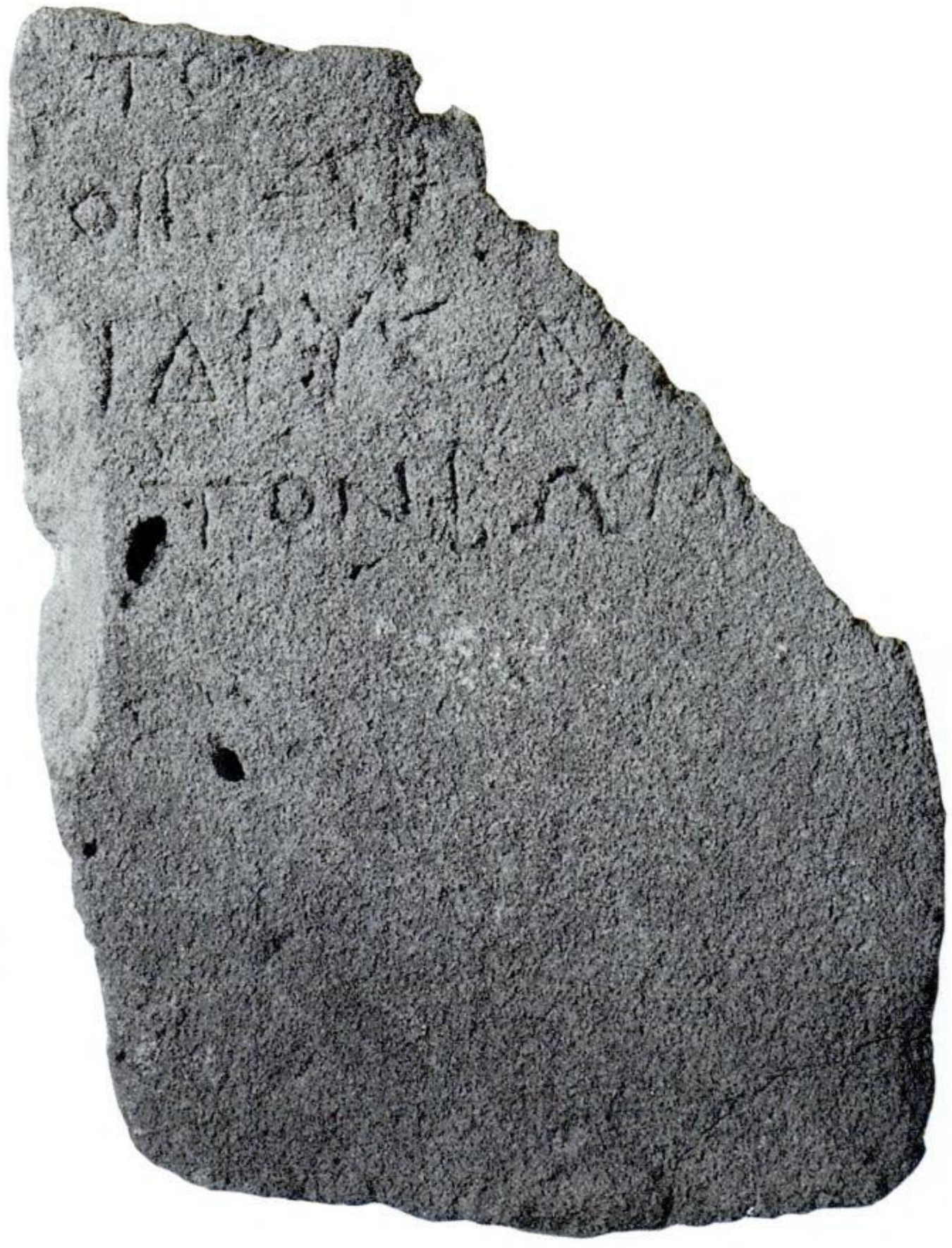
8. Honorific dedication for Democrates, son of Byttakos, *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis*; first century BC/first century AD.

9. Clay tablet from Susa, documenting an account in Greek; second century.



10. Clay tablet: 'Graeco-Babyloniaca' document, inscribed in Greek script.

11a. Dedication of Soteles and his soldiers to Zeus Soter, Poseidon and Artemis Soteira, from Failaka, Arab-Persian gulf; end fourth/early third century.



11b. Altar dedicated 'to the gods' by 'those from Ikaros', from Failaka, Arab-Persian gulf; end fourth/early third century.

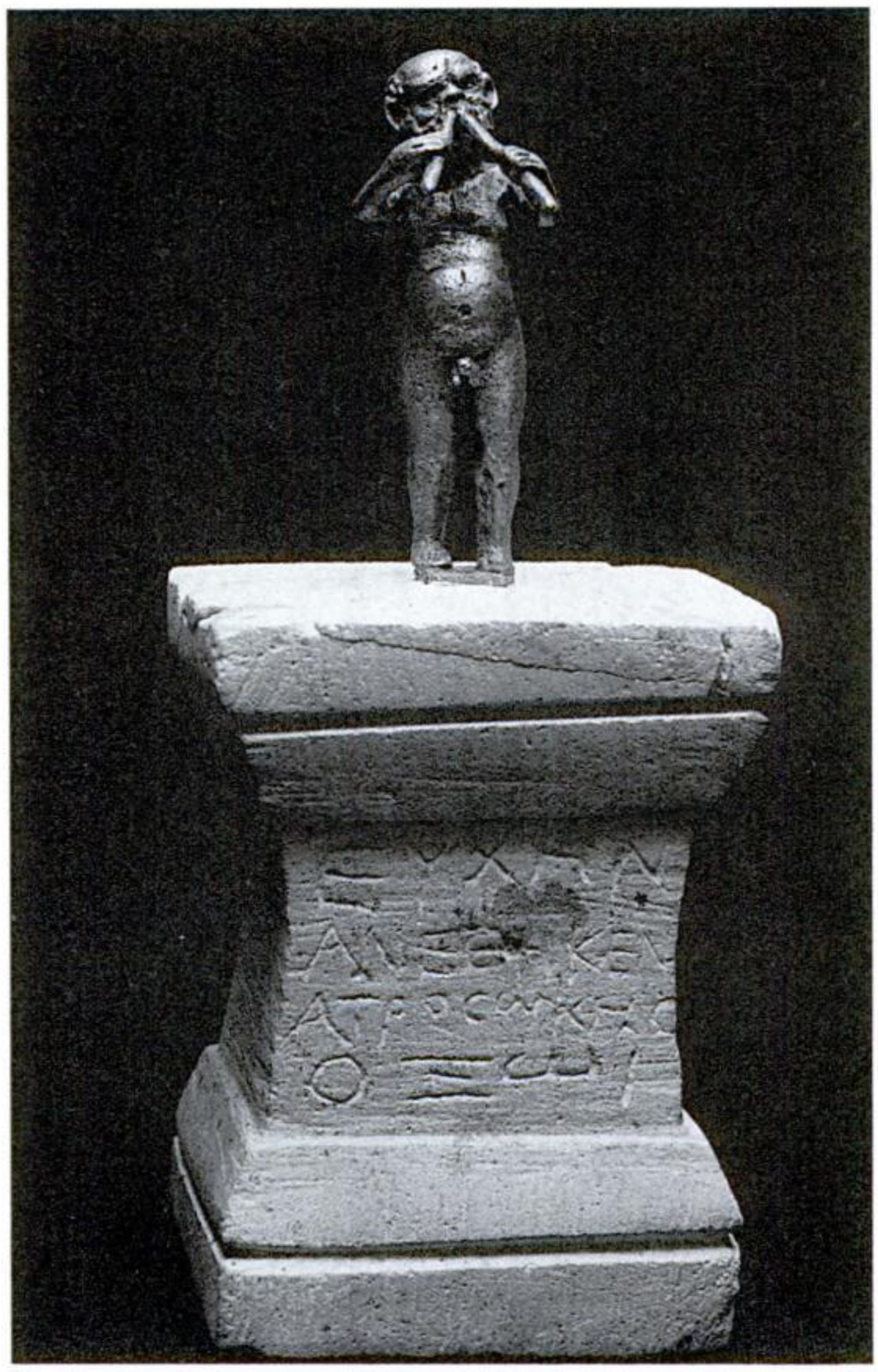
12. Fragment of a relief showing satyrs from Kermanshah, Iran; hellenistic period.

13. Seleucid dossier from Failaka, Arab-Persian gulf; reign of Antiochus III.

14. Hellenistic temple of the Saviour Goddess with Persepolitan column bases, from Failaka, Arab-Persian gulf.

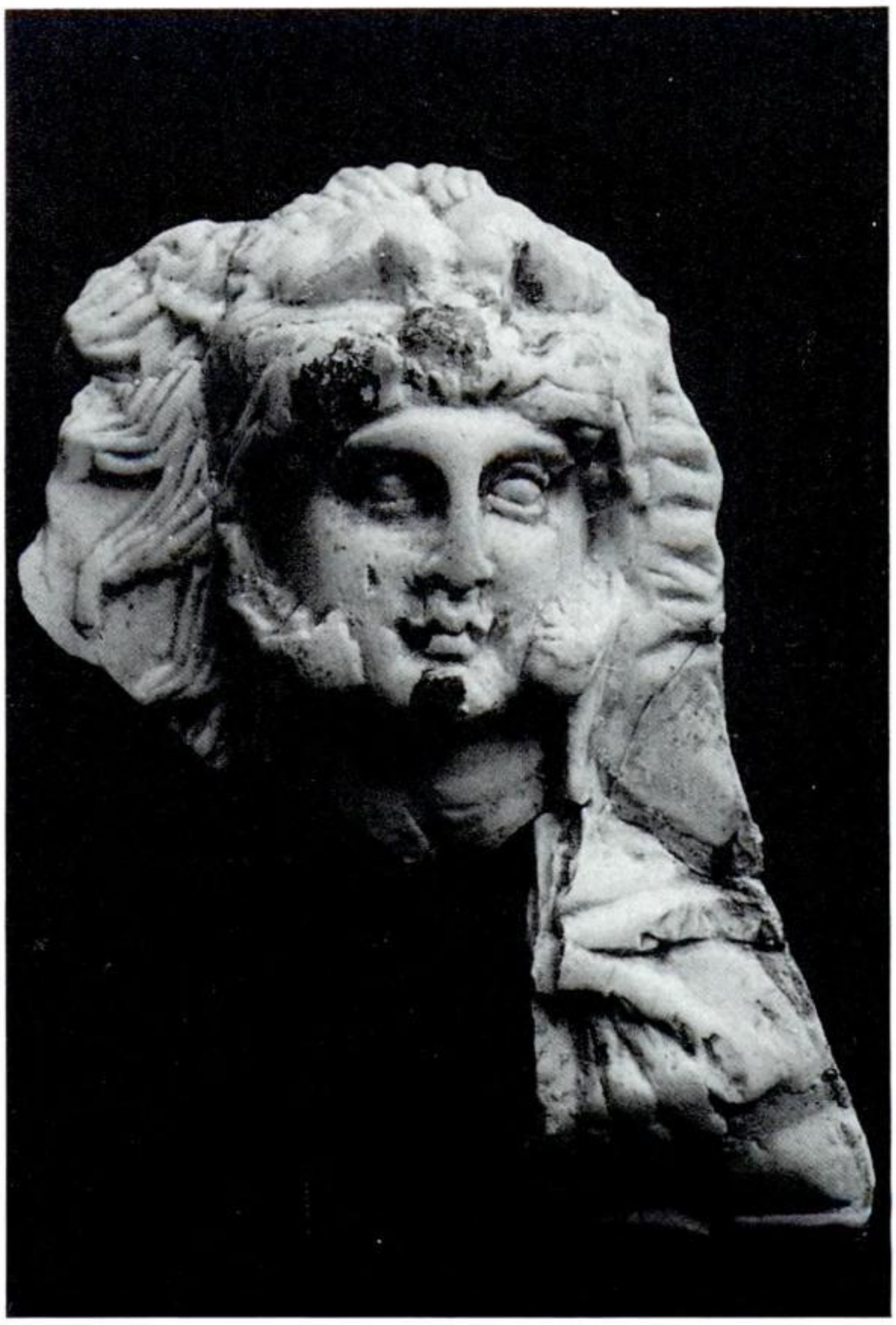
15. Excavation at the Hellenistic temple at Failaka, Arab-Persian gulf.

16. Altar with statuette of Eros, dedicated by Atrosokes to Oxos, from Takht-i Sangin, Tadzhikistan; second century.

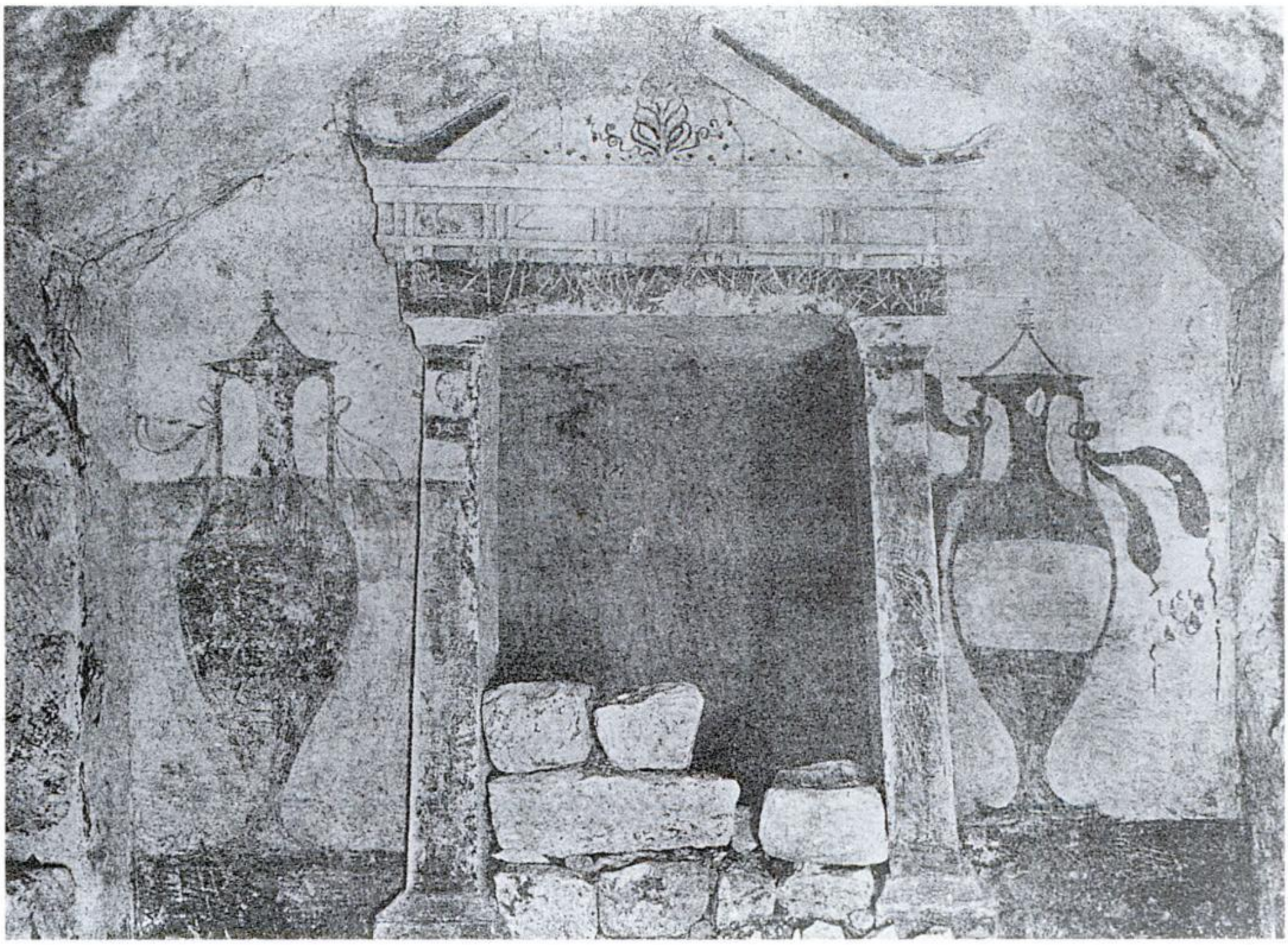


17. Portrait of a hellenistic 'prince' in unbaked clay, from Takht-i Sangin, Tadzhikistan; third century.

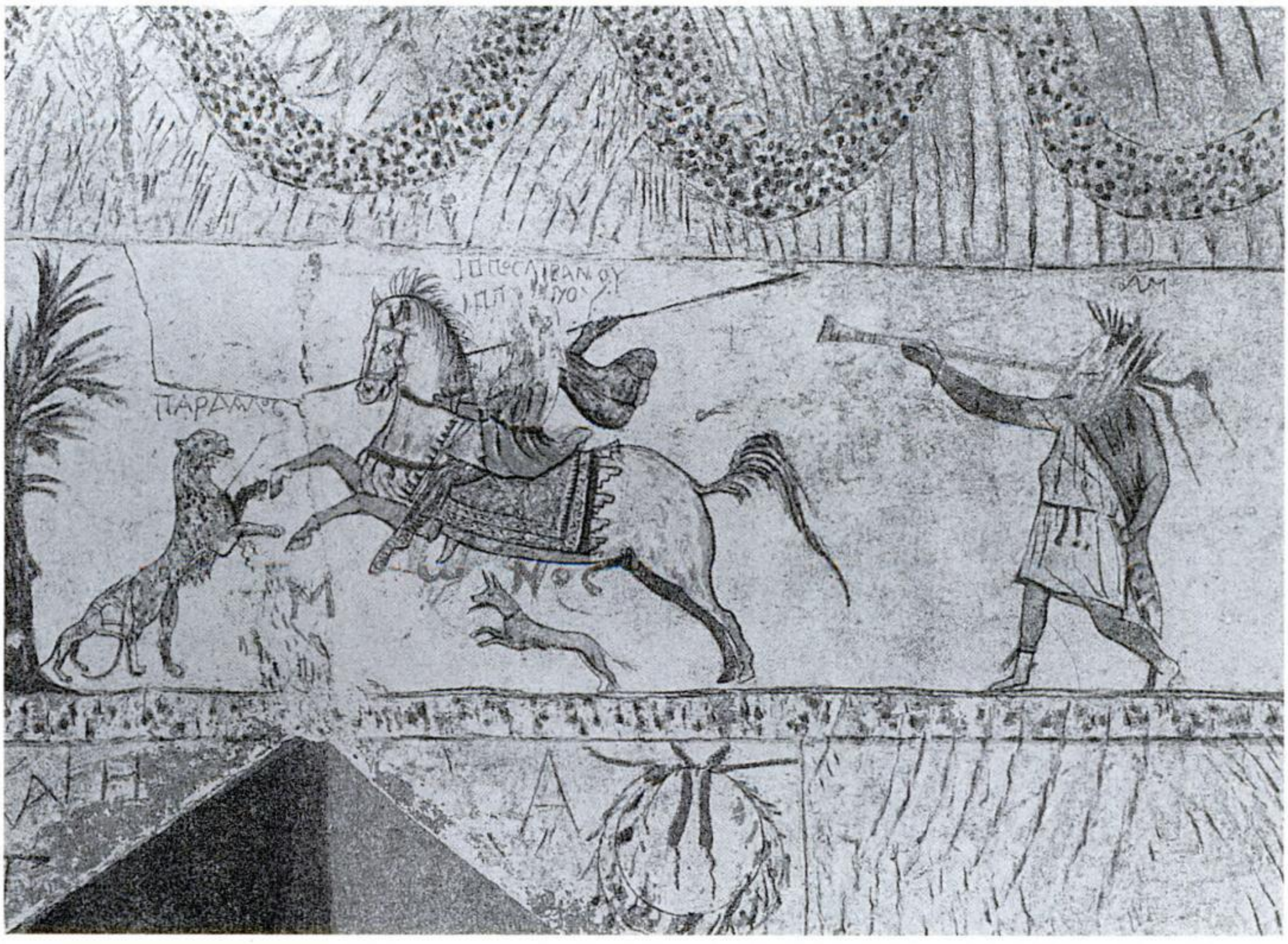
18. Painted alabaster head of a personage in satrapal headgear, from Takht-i Sangin, Tadzhikistan; third/second century.



19. Fragment of a miniature ivory *makhaira*/sheath, showing ?Alexander of Macedon wearing the lion-scalp headdress, from Takht-i Sangin, Tadzhikistan; third century.

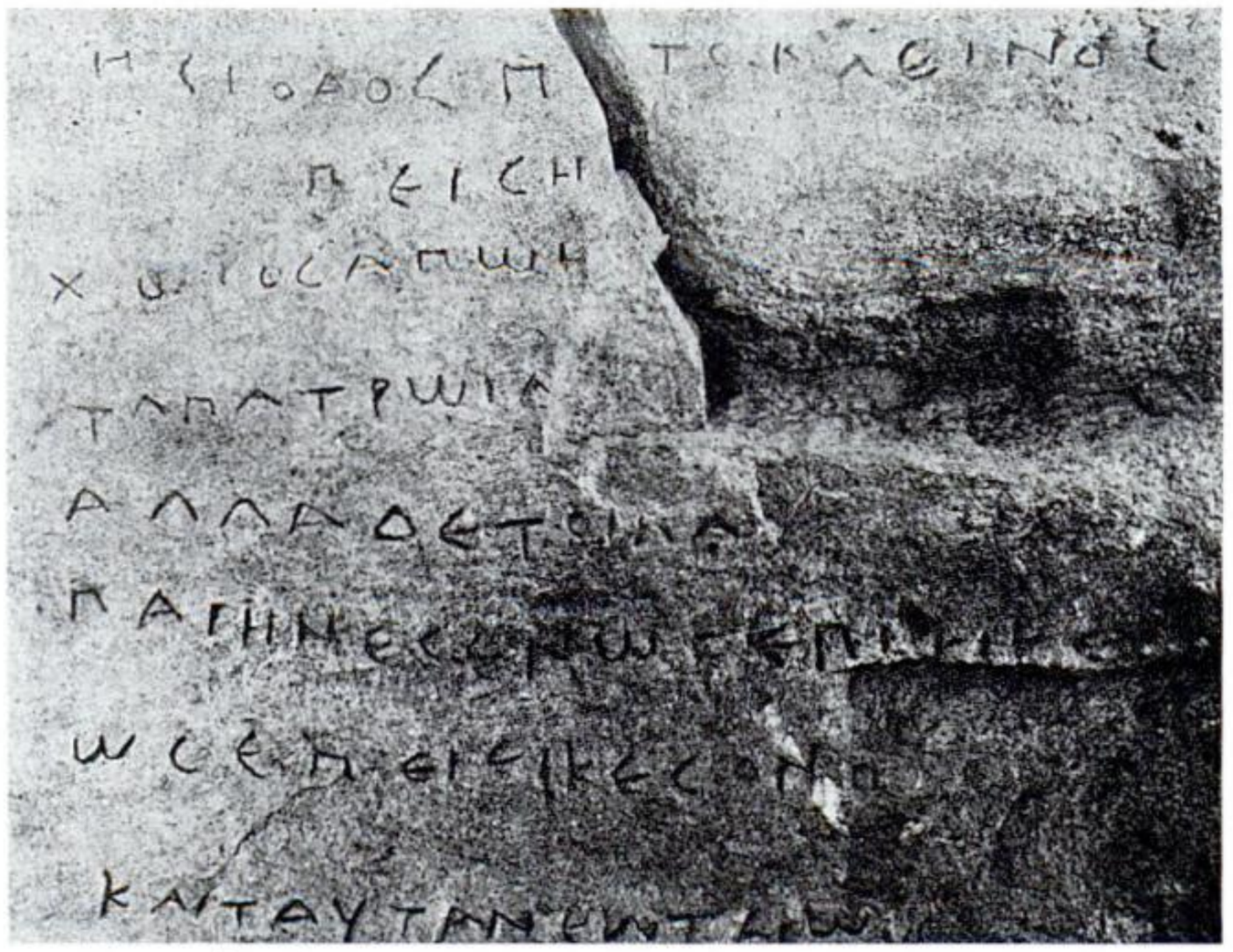


20. Tomb of the hellenistic necropolis of Marisa, decorated in Greek style.

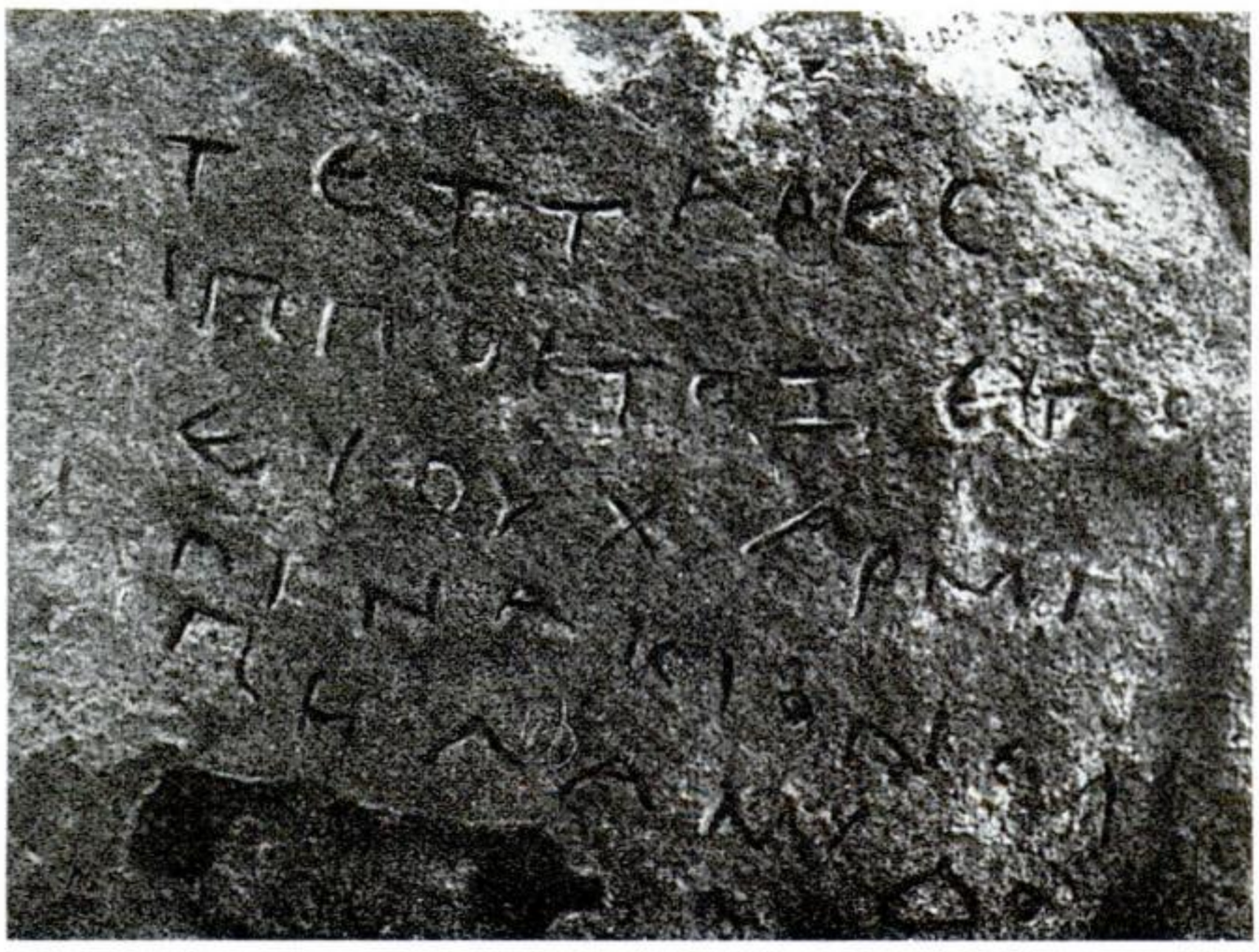


21. Part of the frieze painted above the niches in the tomb at Marisa, showing an exotic hunting-scene, with the names of the animals written in Greek.

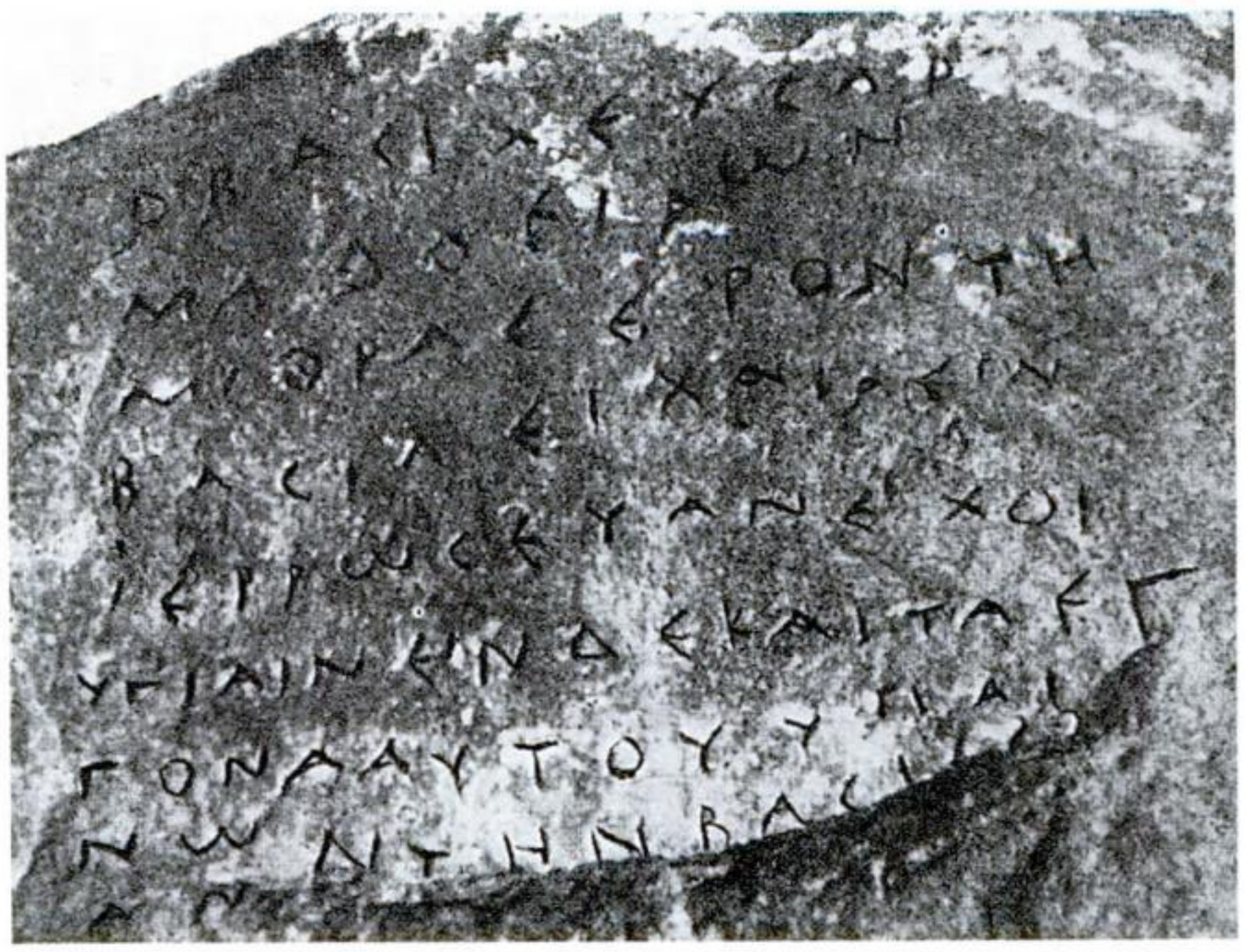
22. Part of the frieze painted above the niches in the tomb at Marisa, with inscriptions in Greek of the dead and the animals portrayed.



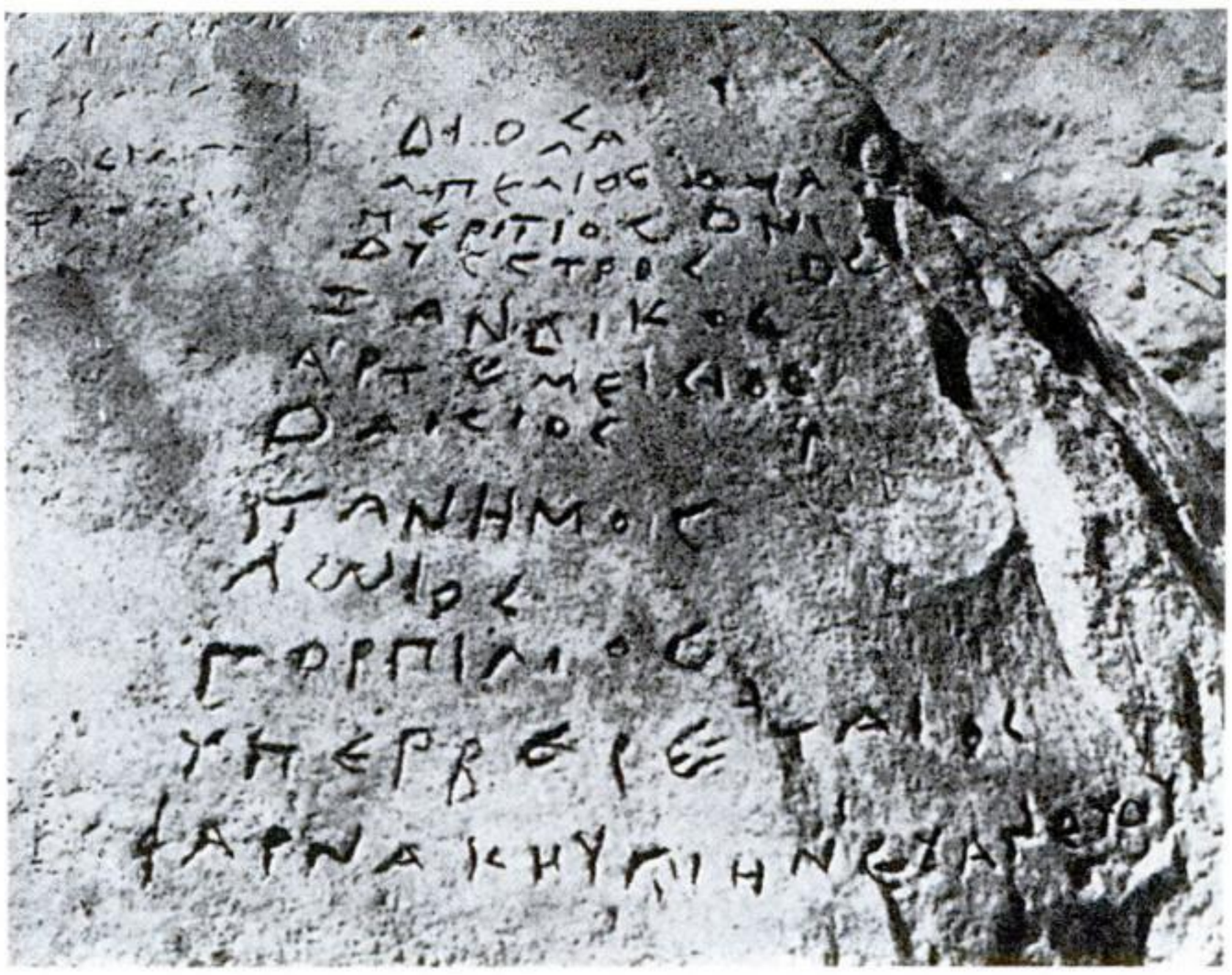
23. Greek rock inscription from Armavir, Armenia, referring to Hesiod; *c.* 200.



24. Greek rock inscription from Armavir, Armenia, containing a list, or perhaps an inventory; *c.* 200.



25. Greek rock inscription from Armavir, Armenia: a letter of a king Mithras to Orontes, king; *c*. 200.



26. Greek rock inscription from Armavir, Armenia: the Seleucid calendar; *c*. 200.

27. Rock relief of Heracles, with Greek dedication, in honour of the Seleucid governor of the Upper Satrapies, from Bisitun, Media; 148.

28. Greek dedication for Cleomenes, Seleucid governor of the Upper Satrapies, from Bisitun, Media; 148.

29. Tetradrachm of Antiochus I (281-261), from Seleucia-Tigris.

for the assembly of Macedonians (Briant 1973). But the assemblies of Macedonians (under arms or not) for capital cases, which were optional, or to acclaim an accession, function rather as a way for the king to realise and display public support than as an independent authority with freedom of action and choice. As contemporaries like Plato and Demosthenes perceived, the Macedonian monarchy was an absolutist regime (but note the critical remarks by Cabanes 1980). This reappraisal of the character of Macedonian kingship in turn necessitates revision of older approaches to the character of hellenistic monarchies because they were founded on the distinction between the 'national', limited monarchy of Macedon and personal, unlimited hellenistic monarchy, the portrayal of which has been negatively influenced by the stereotypical image of 'oriental despotism'. There is little difference in reality between the absolute powers of an Argead king, or of a Seleucid or a Ptolemy (or even an Achaemenid king). The Macedonian kingships of the hellenistic period inherited the pattern of absolute Macedonian monarchy from the past.

The autocratic power of the hellenistic kings was therefore not something new, although differently formulated depending on specific circumstances and contexts. Too much has been made of hellenistic official royal titulature consisting as it does simply of the title *basileus* followed by the king's personal name without the proper names of the peoples over whom the king rules. In fact this titulature continues the traditional official nomenclature the Greeks used for the Achaemenid kings who, in public contexts, were designated only by royal title and personal name, or even by title alone (*GHI* nos. 113,9; 118,11; 123,14). Yet the Achaemenids were, of course, 'national' monarchs, as they stress repeatedly in their inscriptions, as well as rulers of a great empire of different peoples and places (cf. Herrenschmidt 1976). The Greek omission of the latter in documents is partly because it was a Greek practice to address the sovereign power, whether a king (or queen: cf. Cleopatra of Epirus in the *thearodokoi* list from Argos of *c.* 330, cf. Charneux 1966, 157 l. 11) or the citizen-body in the case of a *polis*. It is mistaken to infer anything new or peculiarly hellenistic about these kingships from what is absent in titulature. Like the kings of Macedon and the Achaemenids in the past, the Seleucids and Ptolemies were autocrats who built multi-ethnic *empires* round a national core. The tag 'personal monarchy' is only relevant in so far as the kingdoms were originally created out of the personal achievements of the Successors, and in autocracy the individual quality of rulers is always important.

A famous extract on kingship from a Byzantine encyclopaedia, known as the *Suda*, reflects the combination of military achievement and personal merit as defining characteristics of *basileia* in the early hellenistic period:

> Monarchy. It is neither descent (lit. 'nature') nor legitimacy (lit. 'justice') which gives monarchies to men, but the ability to command an army and to handle affairs competently. Such was the case with Philip and the Successors of Alexander. For Alexander's natural son was in no way helped by his kinship with him, because of his weakness of spirit. While those who had no connection with Alexander became kings of almost the whole inhabited world. (*Suda*, s.v. *Basileia* (2); Austin 37)

This fits the only description to survive from antiquity of the transformation of a Successor from satrap and general to *basileus*. After Demetrius' great naval victory over Ptolemy off Cyprus in 306, his father, Antigonus the One-Eyed, was greeted as *basileus* before a crowd of spectators, gathered at the palace, by the bearer of the good tidings, one of Antigonus' most trusted diplomats, the Greek Aristodemus of Miletus: 'Hail, King Antigonus, we have defeated Ptolemy in a sea-battle' (Plutarch *Dem.* 17). This signal, probably prearranged, prompted 'the people' (or the army) to acclaim Antigonus and Demetrius as kings: military victory, reinforced by popular acclamation, not charismatic claims or claims to be chosen by the gods to rule, justified this first assumption of the position of *basileus*. In the light of the *Suda* passage we may suspect that Seleucus, who assumed the royal title in 305/4 (Sachs/Wiseman 1954, 203 and 205, obv. 6-7; Austin 138) after his great conquests in the Upper Satrapies from Iran to the frontier of ancient India, and Ptolemy, whom Diodorus describes as offering victory celebrations after his successful defence of Egypt against invasion in 306 (D.S. XX 76,6), both used their military victories to support their own usurpation of the royal title.

It is a mistake to play down the territorial basis of the new hellenistic monarchies merely on the grounds of titulature. From the beginning the power of the Successors had a territorial base – the satrapies they were appointed to govern. Power politics and war revolved around the control of these, as agreements on the shareout of the satrapies in 323, and again in 320 at Triparadeisos, make explicitly plain. A temporary treaty in 311 by whose terms 'formal recognition was accorded the dismemberment of Alexander's empire' (*RC* p. 6) underlines how power was equated with, and measured by, territorial domain: Cassander was recognised as military governor (*strategos*) of 'Europe', Antigonus had sway over 'all Asia', while Lysimachus was named master of Thrace and Ptolemy master of Egypt and the neighbouring cities in Libya and Arabia (D.S. XIX 105,1-4; Austin 30).

The Successors' prime – at times their only – assets were the loyalty of their armed followers, as Seleucus' few hundred infantry and horsemen (see above, pp. 115-16) exemplify. These suggest the foundation on which the new monarchic states were begun. The possession of a kingdom, on the other hand, requires an administrative structure

of some complexity and the evolution of systems promoting the authority of the king and fostering loyalty to the central power. The Seleucids and the Ptolemies developed their power while following Alexander's policy (and that of the Achaemenids) of drawing upon the local peoples to make their kingdoms work. New evidence shows that the Successor kings were more positive in using and supporting non-Greeks in their empires than was dictated by pure necessity. This discovery is significant because it helps to explain, as other chapters discuss, how the new régimes were able to function at all in a non-Greek setting, how the kings were able to maintain power, found dynasties and last as long as they did. To understand the relative stability of these kingdoms the historian has to know the mechanisms by which the kings won the support of Greek and non-Greek men of rank from whom they recruited their officers and officials.

On his funeral car Alexander was portrayed for contemporary spectators under the combined protection of Macedonian and Persian bodyguards. Alexander's policy of 'fusion' or assimilation of special élite non-Greek groups during the conquest had been partly pragmatic. The need for manpower, military expertise – the specialist skills that Iranian bowmen, slingers and cavalry supplied – and bureaucratic and administrative personnel made this policy unavoidable once Alexander decided to centre his empire in the Fertile Crescent at Babylon. The historian C. Habicht held that the Successors turned their backs upon Alexander's policy towards the Iranians, elevating as a general rule only Greeks and Macedonians (Habicht 1958; cf. Walbank 1981, 65). This influential theory underlies many modern analyses of the character of the new hellenistic kingdoms. From it stems the now conventional picture of a hermetically closed Macedonian Greek minority culturally impervious to their non-Greek environment, monolingual, ethnically exclusive, running colonialist régimes purely for their own profit. The Seleucid kingdom is thought to offer a paradigm ever since Habicht calculated on the basis of a sample of about 250 names (spanning three centuries and ignoring the problems in understanding the practices of name-giving, cf. below pp. 150-3) that only about 2.5 per cent of non-Greeks held positions of authority. Since the Seleucid empire embraced the greatest number of different cultures of any hellenistic kingdom the apparent neglect of non-Greek indigenous talent is interpreted as a deliberate resolve to monopolise the fruits of conquest. This reconstruction is wrong in several important respects.

Only three satraps of Iranian origin are known who were still in office at the time of Alexander's death: the Bactrian Oxyartes, father of Roxane, in the Hindu-Kush province Parapomisadae, was confirmed in office in 323 and 321, as was Atropates in north-west Media, where he founded a kingdom; Phrataphernes was retained in Parthia and

Hyrcania in 323, but had either died by 321 or had lost Parthia to a Macedonian, Philip. The explanation in the case of Porus and Taxiles, left as autonomous rulers by Alexander, that they could only have been removed from their Indian kingdoms by 'a royal army and an outstanding general' (D.S. XVIII 39,6 referring to 320), certainly hints at the option of other strategies. Recent studies drawing partly on new material are gradually revealing that in bureaucracy, administration, in the court and in the armies, the early Seleucids and Ptolemies drew much more widely upon non-Greek personnel to fill responsible positions in the Seleucid kingdom and in Egypt than used to be believed.[2] The 2.5 per cent of non-Greek personnel in the Seleucid empire is statistically worthless since the evidence then was (and still is) so incomplete and random geographically and chronologically. The sample was anyhow limited (by the selection of mainly literary sources) to the highest level of army, bureaucracy and court. It is to be expected that topmost positions would be filled predominantly by Macedonians and Greeks as under the Achaemenids they had been held by Iranians. This monopoly seems something generally imperial as opposed to characteristically Greek. What goes on at levels immediately below, and in the middle and lower ranks, is more revelatory of policy towards non-Greek subjects. It is here that the role of non-Greeks in high positions as city-governors, bureaucrats and army officers is being revealed. This is exemplified by a new Seleucid inscription from Denizli in Lydia of 267 which adds Banabelos, the administrator of the land-holding of a high-ranking Seleucid dignitary, Achaeus the Elder (a later relation of the same name was to be viceroy of Asia Minor under Antiochus III). Banabelos' Babylonian name suggests his origin from the first of the Seleucid satrapies (Wörrle 1975; Austin 142). A new inscription from Amyzon in Caria has even wider historical implications. Directly attesting the promotion of an Iranian, Bagadates, by the Macedonian satrap of Caria, Asander, it therefore not only contradicts the idea of the Successors' exclusion of non-Greeks but also attests the precisely opposite trend, their elevation by the personal intervention of Macedonian governors, a process that can be seen as probably much more widely practised by the Successors than had been thought:

> The *demos* of Amyzon decided in the plenary assembly, on the proposal of Asander the satrap, that the *neokoros* of the temple of Artemis be Bagadates whom the oracle at Delphi has designated because he is devoted to the affairs of the sanctuary, and he and his son Ariaramnes are to be granted citizenship and immunity from all taxes. (*Amyzon* 2 (321); for a probable later descendant of Bagadates, Ariaramnes, holding the same office, cf. *ibid*. 18 (quoted above p. 59))

[2] For the Ptolemies, cf. Welles 1970; Samuel 1970; 1983. For the Seleucids, cf. Launey 1949 i, 94-101; 1950 ii, 1088ff.; Musti 1977, 261ff., 309ff.; Sherwin-White 1983a, 268-9.

Little could illustrate better how in the period of the Successors Alexander's 'Iranian' policy was actively followed up.

The Successors, notably Seleucus I and Ptolemy I, knew they had to continue the broad outlines of Alexander's approach (cf. Briant 1987b, 17-22). Diodorus' narrative history of the period (323-301) alone (XVIII-XX) presents rich evidence of the recruitment of barbarian forces (Iranian, Lydian, Carian) from the Asian satrapies among which the most numerous were those from the Persian heartland of Parsa/Persis. He says of the satrap Peucestas:

> At this time Peucestas had ten thousand Persian archers and slingers, three thousand men of every origin armed for the Macedonian formation (the phalanx), six hundred Greek and Thracian cavalry and more than four hundred horsemen. (D.S. XIX 14,5)

Peucestas had also an enormous reserve, which he later summoned, of ten thousand Persian bowmen (D.S. XIX 17,5). Macedonian cavalry leaders like Alcetas, brother of the regent Perdiccas, in Pisidia in southern Asia Minor, and Seleucus in Babylonia (D.S. XIX 90-1), deliberately built up their power base from the local populations. Alcetas, in the absence of other support, adopted the tactic of grants of personal gifts, status and generous booty to the Pisidian warrior class, as Diodorus says, to purchase loyalty (*eunoia*) by benefaction (*euergesia*). A little later, the young Pisidian soldiers exhibited fierce loyalty towards Alcetas, preferring their city, Termessus, to fall rather than to surrender Alcetas to his enemy Antigonus (D.S. XVIII 46-7). This price was too high for older, more prudent Pisidians who had Alcetas betrayed, killed and handed over to Antigonus. With a display of true devotion the Pisidian warriors then recovered the unburied body of their Macedonian leader and buried it with ceremony. Alcetas' funeral monument is thought to be the largest of the surviving rock tombs cut in the cliffs on the north-west of the ancient site of Termessus. This impressive tomb blends Anatolian and Macedonian tomb-building traditions; the inner chamber is dominated by a grand relief of a charging horseman in Macedonian armour (Picard 1964; Hornblower 1981, 119-20; Pekridou 1986). It is a vivid reminder both of the cultural interaction of the age of the Successors and of the magnificence and ceremony of this warlike and princely period.

A distinction must be drawn between this kind of evidence, which shows the Successors dependent on non-Greek soldiers and recruiting members of élites to positions of power at a local level, and the small and restricted court circle which normally held the highest posts within the Seleucid empire. How far it is true to say that this group remained exclusively Greco-Macedonian, in the sense that the Persian, with only rare and doubtful exceptions, *seems* to have done (Briant

1988b; see Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1990, 267-8 for criticisms of this view), is hard to determine as the evidence at our disposal is so incomplete. If one uses the criterion of names, then, certainly, practically all known Seleucid satraps and top military commanders in the third century appear to be Greco-Macedonians (but compare now Antiochus II's son, Apames (p. 126)). But, with the exception of Euthydemus of Bactria whom Polybius describes as 'a Magnesian' (see below p. 198), it is uncertain how reliable an ethnic indicator personal names by themselves actually are (cf. below pp. 150-3). Further, our knowledge of the matrimonial strategies of the dominant group is severely limited: only for the Seleucid royal family is there some evidence showing, significantly, that they repeatedly married the daughters of non-Greek dynasts beginning, and this is surely important, with Apame. Whence the members of the court-circle drew their wives is totally unknown. It is entirely possible that they, too, chose to marry women from important non-Greek families, thus bringing them into the orbit of supreme political power, although this must remain speculative. The later story about Stratonice and Hierapolis describes the Syrian, Kumbabos, as a 'Friend' of Seleucus I and member of the court élite (Lucian *de dea Syria* 18-25), and I and II *Maccabees* has several references to members of the Jewish nobility who were elevated to the same status at the Seleucid court in the second century (e.g. I *Maccabees* 10.16; cf. also a figure such as Xerxes of Armenia, below p. 190). This suggests, at the very least, that the Seleucid ruling group was not an impermeable, unchanging élite rigidly marking itself off from the 'ruled' along purely ethnic lines. Such an approach to the style of Seleucid domination seems also to be contradicted by the story of Seleucus I's reconquest of Babylonia where emphasis is laid on the friendly links he had created with local people during his earlier governorship of the province (see above p. 10). It is not impossible that some of these Babylonian allies were raised to positions of power as a reward for their support. This is not to deny that the Macedonian character of Seleucid rule and court was stressed in some contexts (e.g. Antiochus I's cylinder from Borsippa, quoted above pp. 36-7), as the Achaemenid kings earlier had emphasised their Persian identity. But *precisely* what that meant is not clear, and to see it as creating a unity of interest between Greco-Macedonian population groups and the imperial rulers on the one hand versus 'natives' on the other can now be seen to be mistaken. What we should visualise is a small exclusive court group, close to the king and dependent on his favour, occupying the top positions in the satrapies and armies, whose male members, in the the third century, *generally* had Greco-Macedonian names. How and to what degree they were interlinked with members of the various indigenous nobilities remains unclear at present, although some recruitment into their ranks of locally prominent figures by the king is likely (see pp. 150-1). Below that were

regional élites (Greek and non-Greek) running local affairs and representing and governing the ethnically variegated mass of farmers, soldiers, artisans, herders, cult personnel, traders and slaves.

Legitimacy and the dynastic factor

The succession, and the insistence on legitimate filiation, were most vital among the institutions of these dynasties – emphasised by the use of dynastic names to claim legitimacy and advertise dynastic continuity (*OGIS* 90 l. 47; 57 l. 26) – and protected by the practice, adopted first by Antigonus and then successively by Seleucus and Ptolemy, of naming, *pre mortem*, usually the elder of their sons as heir (see above pp. 23-4) – an Achaemenid, as well as earlier, practice. Loyalty to the ruling king was reinforced by the king's inclusion in oaths of loyalty (and in treaties) taken by the king's forces; for example:

> The settlers at Magnesia, the cavalry and the infantry in the city, and the soldiers in the camp and the others who are entered in the citizen body shall swear the following oath: 'I swear by Zeus, the Earth, the Sun, Ares, Athena Areia, the Tauropolos, the Sipylene Mother, Apollo at Panda, all the other gods and goddesses, and the Fortune (*Tyche*) of King Seleucus (II).' (*OGIS* 229; *Staatsverträge* 492; Austin 182)

It is notable that potentially very dangerous rebellions could fail because of the loyalty of the troops to the king, as Antiochus III's kinsman, Achaeus, viceroy of Asia Minor, found to his cost (220-213, Polyb. V 57, see below p. 188) – and before that Molon, viceroy of the Upper Satrapies (222-220, Polyb. V 41-57). Legitimacy and loyalism could be potent. Both Achaeus and Molon ended up impaled, their noses, eyes and ears cut off – a traditional Achaemenid (and earlier) punishment meted out to traitors. It is as well to stress the point that we can infer that the armies were generally loyal to the king precisely because the literary sources focus mainly on the fact of a secession and the aims of rebels.

Especially surprising to the later twentieth-century observer is the fact that there seems to have been little elaboration of a coronation in this period. In this respect the Seleucid kingdom would appear to follow older Macedonian practice where there is no evidence for a complex ritual of enthronement. If this is correct, then it stands in marked contrast to the practice of earlier Assyrian, Babylonian (cf. Seux 1980, 148-9) and Persian kings (Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1983a; Briant 1991). It was at the king's 'investiture', a gathering attended by crowds (civil and military), that the king assumed formally the accoutrements of power – diadem, purple dress, sceptre (cf. above p.

117) and other hallmarks. These were the material and symbolic marks of kingship, perhaps not to be dismissed lightly as 'the superficial signs of kingship' (Walbank 1981, 75; cf. 1984, 67), nor is it true that these insignia only became important in the second century (that is, when some would associate it with the concept of 'decline'). In war, the king's armour was of the choicest workmanship (as, for example, reflected on the coins) and, dangerously but usefully, distinctive in battle, as a passage in *Maccabees* reveals:

> Eleazar Avaran, seeing that one of the elephants wore royal armour and stood out above all the rest, thought that the king was riding on it. (I *Maccabees* 6.43)

Here a Judaean rebel chases an elephant wearing 'royal armour', believing (interestingly) that Seleucid kings might fight from elephants – an example most famously set by the Indian king Porus in Alexander's reign (Plutarch *Alex.* 60). The visually distinctive splendour of a king was, of course, a matter of military stratagem, to provide a recognisable and vitalising rallying focus for the troops in the chaos and trauma of warfare. To sum up, it is possible that 'inauguration' rituals remained relatively undeveloped and unimportant both because the Seleucids had no elaborate Macedonian coronation model to adapt and also because the very restrictive pattern of royal succession was quickly established (in contrast, for example, to the Roman empire or the medieval period) and, therefore, relative stability over the succession was the norm. In England, too, until quite recently coronations were not the elaborate ceremonial spectacle they have become in the twentieth century (Cannadine 1983).

Marriage and the production of successors are integral props of royal dynasties. The Seleucids generally took care, at least in the third century when their empire was enormous, to intermarry with the offspring of powers both outside and inside the empire, e.g. Seleucus I and Apame (from Bactria), Antiochus I and Stratonice (daughter of Demetrius the Besieger), Antiochus II and Berenice of Egypt, Antiochus III and Laodice of Pontus. Especially important were the close links established with dynasts along the edges and within the empire: Bithynia, Cappadocia, Armenia, Bactria, while the recurring matrimonial links with Pontus over generations tied the two royal houses inextricably together; these served effectively to strengthen Seleucid imperial control. (Note now also Apames, the son of Antiochus II (Sachs/Hunger 1959 no.–245, obv. 13).) It remains uncertain whether the Seleucids, like the kings of Macedon before them, practised polygamy, as did the Ptolemies in the second century. At least until the second century, the succession caused no irremediable damage to the Seleucids (see below p. 221-2). When Seleucus III Thunderbolt was assassinated, for example, within the army and had no heirs, his younger brother, Antiochus (III),

was 'recalled by the army' to be king (below p. 188). The intricate politics behind this episode cannot, unfortunately, be retrieved – what is important is that despite the crisis royal power was successfully retained within the ruling family. This is not to say that successions were invariably bloodless or problem-free. There are several examples of the sons of Seleucid kings being put to death, such as Antiochus I's co-regent, Seleucus (267/6, cf. Parker/Duberstein 1956, 21; Trogus *Prol.* 26), and Antiochus IV's co-regent, Antiochus, whose execution in July-August 170 is reported in a Babylonian king-list (Sachs/Wiseman 1954, 204, 208 rev. 12; Austin 138)

From the start of the Seleucid dynasty, the queen had won public recognition and honours, such as honorific statues, from Greek cities in and outside the empire, which can express the influence of a queen over the king's policy-making, though that is disguised by the public emphasis that the queen's actions are in line with the king's policy. Note, for example, the Milesian decree for Apame, wife of Seleucus I, honouring her for her help to Milesian soldiers campaigning with Seleucus (see above, p. 26). A similar, diplomatic stress on the harmony of royal policy is found in the letter of Laodice, wife of Antiochus III, to the city of Iasos:

> When Kydias, son of Hierocles, was crown-bearer, letter. In the month of Elaphebolion. Queen Laodice to the Council and People of Iasos, greetings. Having often heard my brother (i.e. husband, Antiochus III) recall the help he constantly provides to his friends and allies when he recovered your city which had been afflicted by unexpected natural disasters, he restored to you your freedom and your laws, and for the rest he intends to increase the citizen body and bring it to a better condition, and since it is my policy to act in accordance with his zeal and eagerness and because of this to confer a benefaction on those citizens who are destitute, which would be of general advantage to the entire people, I have written to Strouthion the financial official (*dioiketes*), to have brought to the city every year for ten years 1,000 Attic medimni of corn to be delivered to the people's representative. You would do well therefore to instruct the treasurers to receive (the corn) and to utilise the proceeds from the sale of a fixed amount of it, and (to instruct) the presidents and any others you select to make sure that they deposit the sum raised from this (to serve) as dowries for the daughters of needy citizens, giving each of the brides not more than 300 Antiochene drachmas. If you continue to be (well) disposed towards my brother and in general towards our house as is fitting, [and] gratefully remember all our benefactions, I will try to help in securing in every way the other benefits I intend to confer, acting in accordance with the wishes of my brother. For I know that [he] is very eager to bring about the restoration [of the] city. Farewell. (Pugliese-Carratelli *Annuario* 45-6 (1967-8), 445-53; J. and L. Robert *BE* 1971, 621; *SEG* XXVI, 1226; Austin 156)

This inscription, like that of Miletus for Apame (cf. above p. 26), does

give some indication of the power of the queen, who can in her own right communicate with cities by letter, like the governors of the satrapies, and either from her own resources, or possibly even local crown resources, fund subsidies at a time of crisis. A further indicator of the Seleucid queen's political prominence are the occasionally preserved references in Babylonian astronomical diaries to public announcements of her death (Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –253) and the official mourning on such an occasion (ibid., 1989, no. –181). Interesting, too, is the recurring stress on the royal family as a unit, king, queen and sons (cf. the text possibly from Hyrcania, see above pp. 81-2), or just the queen and her sons (cf. Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –187), as in the following, fragmentary Babylonian text. Although a lot of the text is hard to understand, it clearly refers to a gift made by the king to his wife and sons and their subsequent joint bestowal of this on Babylonian citizens (the copy of the transaction, about eighty years later, suggests that it may have been reconfirmed or upheld then):

Obverse
1. Adar, day 8, year 75 (21 March 236), Seleucus (II) king: Nergal-teši-eṭir, the *šatammu* (administrator) of Esagila,
2. son of Bel-ibni, said to the Babylonians of the assembly of Esagila, as follows:
3. 'King Antiochus (II) made a transaction *about fields*, namely that
4. everything which Antiochus (I), his father, and Seleucus (I), his grandfather, the kings, had [...]
5. the arable fields of his own estate in the environs of Babylon and Borsippa which are on the right and left banks
6. of the Euphrates, and the arable fields which *have been confiscated by the royal treasury* (? or 'which are tributary') and everything which [...],
7. he gave to Laodice, his wife, and Seleucus and Antiochus, his sons.
8-11. Laodice, his wife, Seleucus and Antiochus, his sons, have given it to the Babylonians, Borsippeans, Kuthaeans and they wrote that they would give a tithe of the harvests from these arable fields *to the ... of Esagila, Ezida and Emeslam* (i.e. the main sanctuaries of Babylon, Borsippa and Kutha) [the remaining 19 lines of the obverse are poorly preserved]

Reverse
1. Esagila [...]
2. Laodice, his wife, Seleucus and Antiochus, his sons, the making of [...]
3. they established. May the Babylonians 'speak good words' for their fields. May these fields,
4. all of them, as much as (belongs) to the Babylonians, Borsippeans, and Kuthaeans on this day,
5. stay at their disposal as arable land forever. May all the Babylonians,
6-7. who have taken possession of the fields, each one in his parcel(?), have it as arable land at his disposal forever.' [remaining 17 lines are either broken, lost or very hard to understand, except for the date at end]
25. [...] year 139 (= 173), Antioch[us (IV) and Antiochus, his son,

kings]. (C.F. Lehmann, *ZA* 7 (1892), 330-2; Sarkisian 1969, 320-23; van der Spek 1986, 241-8)

The ideology of kingship

Royal ideology, Greek and non-Greek, required warrior kings with all the military virtues of bravery, leadership, success: militarism was part of the package, and personal participation in warfare was viewed as essential. Kings who did not seek military glory were blamed by political commentators such as Polybius (and his sources, Polyb. V 87) – conquest and expansion were expected (Polyb. XXXII 8). Militarism is built into the ideology (Polyb. V 2). War was a major preoccupation for the Seleucids, as it had been for their predecessors, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid. All the third-century Seleucid kings fought wars constantly. Antiochus I was wounded in the throat in the course of battle (*OGIS* 220; Burstein 20), and Antiochus III in the mouth losing several teeth during the battle in Bactria (Polyb. X 49,14). A dedication from Lydia by a Seleucid military leader in honour of Antiochus III's doctor, Apollophanes of Seleucia-Pieria, may reflect another similar incident of wounding, though that is not certain:

> To Zeus Porottenos on behalf of [the chief?] doctor of the king Apollophanes, son of Apollophanes, from Seleucia-Pieria, Arkesilaos, son of Arkesilaos, the commander (dedicated) this thank-offering. (P. Herrmann *Anzeiger der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 107 (1970), 94, nr. 1)

The personal participation of the kings in war is common to Macedonian and 'Near Eastern' traditions. It contrasts sharply with the pattern generated by Roman emperors after Augustus and before the third century AD, who more rarely got physically involved in fighting in battle.

In the absence of realistic (and securely attributed) contemporary portraits, we know more about the ideals of a Seleucid king's physical appearance, from coins, seals and gems, than about the reality (see Plate 3). Image was important – these 'portraits' may reveal an ageing monarch (though wrinkles are not necessarily an indicator of this since they may instead represent qualities such as courage, cf. Killerich 1988, 59), but, as our own coins and stamps, for example in England today, show, that does not mean realism. Royal approval of the portraits on official 'documents' such as the silver coins of royal mints, official seal stamps and royal gems is highly probable (cf. Plutarch *Alex.* 4), though whether the head officials of all royal mints always sought permission from court is uncertain (cf. above p. 116). It is interesting to note that new coin portraits of Elizabeth II are officially

approved by the queen herself. Statuary could be employed, as Alexander found, to advertise a particularly gratifying self-image. But this source of evidence is disappointing for the Seleucids of whom no sculpted portrait attribution is certain (cf. Smith 1988), least of all the famous head of 'Antiochus III', illustrated in many text books on hellenistic history, and now demoted to that of a Roman senator (Stewart 1979, 82-4; but see Smith 1988, 81-2). The inscribed dedication bases of many royal statues of Seleucid kings have survived, but not, alas, the statues that went with them.

The personal moral qualities a king, ideally, possessed are attested in royal inscriptions, civic decrees and dedications and Ptolemaic kingship treatises by such authors as the early hellenistic Euhemerus, perhaps Hecataeus, certainly the second-century Pseudo-Aristeas, quite apart from our literary historical sources for the period, such as Diodorus, Polybius and Appian. A good example is Seleucus' address to his army on the occasion of his appointment of Antiochus I as co-regent and the latter's simultaneous marriage to Stratonice (cf. above pp. 24-5):

> Then he assembled his army, which perhaps now suspected something, and told them of his exploits and of the extent of his empire, showing that it surpassed that of any of the other successors of Alexander, and saying that as he was now growing old it was hard for him to govern it on account of its size. 'I wish,' he said, 'to divide it, in the interests of your future safety, and to give a part of it now to those who are dearest to me. It is fitting that all of you, who have advanced to such greatness of dominion and power under me since the time of Alexander should co-operate with me in everything. The dearest to me and well worthy to reign, are my grown-up son and my wife. As they are young, I pray they may soon have children to aid in guarding the empire. I join them in marriage in your presence and send them to be sovereigns of the upper provinces now. The law which I shall impose upon you is not the customs of the Persians and other nations, but the law which is common to all, that what the king ordains is always right.' When he had thus spoken the army shouted that he was the greatest king of all the successors of Alexander and the best father. Seleucus laid the same injunctions on Stratonice and his son, then joined them in marriage, and sent them to their kingdom, showing himself even stronger in this famous act than in his deeds of arms. (Appian *Syr.* 61)

Babylonian official documents are a further, very important, but rather neglected, source for the ideology of Seleucid kingship within the Babylonian context (cf. above pp. 36-7; *ABC* 11, 13b; Sherwin-White 1983a; Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991) as, for example, in this passage from a newly published astronomical diary:

> That [month,] on the 8th (= 6 April 205), King Antiochus (III) and the
> [...]
> went out [from] the palace to the gate ... of Esagila ...
> [...] of Esagila he made before them. Offerings(?) [...] Marduk-eṭir ...

> [...] of their descendants(?) were set, entered the *akitu*-temple [...]
> [...] made [sacrifices for] Ishtar of Babylon and the life of King Antiochus
> [...]. (Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –204, C. rev. 14-18)

Despite its fragmentary state, the text seems to indicate the participation of the king in what is almost certainly the traditional Babylonian New Year festival – a socio-politically important ceremony that ideally required the participation of the reigning king (Kuhrt 1987b), known from another source (*ABC* 13b) to have received official support and funding by the Seleucid rulers (cf. below p. 203).

Panegyrics for kings also listed the stereotypical virtues of the hellenistic rulers, though except for Theocritus' encomium for Ptolemy II and the papyrus of a panegyric to an unidentified Ptolemaic king, none of this originally enormous genre has survived, outside the pages of Polybius, to give contemporary evidence of this medium for royal ideology. According to these ideals, the kings were moral rulers, not arbitrary despots, ideal exponents of traditional Greek and, in Babylonia, Babylonian kingly ethics. New in the Greek world of the hellenistic period are the linked concepts of *euergesia* ('doing good') and *soteria* ('saving'), of key importance in the relations between king and subject (cf. below p. 209). It is impossible to doubt from the evidence that just government and fair play were the publicised aims of the Seleucid kings – not perhaps surprising. As is common in government of any sort there is often a divide, major, minor or middling, between practice and theory (cf. below p. 176: Failaka), but in our period the evidence is insufficient for us to attempt to assess this. Also, the same piece of evidence can be used to reflect both sides of the same picture – a Seleucid order from Labraunda (cf. the text from Amyzon, above p. 59) curbing pillage and mayhem by Seleucid soldiers in towns or sanctuaries attests both official royal concern for subjects and how, on the ground, this might work in practice:

> Those sacrificing ... King Antiochus has ordered us to give attention to [the shrines] among all his other prescriptions. You, therefore, behave well in other respects, as is fitting, and do not take up quarters [?privately] at Labraunda, do not lodge in the [?sacred buildings], and do not [?bring together] flocks/herds (of animals) in the gate-houses, or in the [?court], or in the st[oas ...]. (*Labraunda* III/2 no. 46, date: *c.* 203)

The Seleucid kings were visible in the various existing media: in portraits on the coinage (even if you could not read the legends), in statues set up in a king's honour by cities and individual benefactors (and loyalists) in public places, and they were memorialised and worshipped at annual cult festivals; months were renamed, local priesthoods were created for their cults. The military tone of the monarchy was also advertised in representations of the kings – e.g. cuirassed statues and the equestrian statuary of the kings – and the

wealth and power of the dynasty broadcast, symbolically, in the Seleucid 'foundations' of temples and in their funding of civic buildings. Throughout the empire, cults, Greek as much as non-Greek, received royal gifts and contributions (attested examples: Baetocaece, Uruk, Ur, Babylon, Jerusalem, Didyma). The Seleucids' care to patronise cults and the social and economic structures these entail, as well as town institutions and provision of welfare in emergencies, was a consistent policy, broken usually only in times of crisis, such as war (cf. below p. 197).

Power and patronage

Through war and through civil activities, the king could claim a role as *soter* and *euergetes*, i.e. concretely, through material (often massive) gifts of aid (building materials, food, military requirements), of land, tax immunities, immunities from garrisons or billeting, as well as by the grant of political privileges in the case of communities, and status and power in the case of individuals (cf. Polyb. V 89,8-9 (see above p. 71), for the gifts by kings to Rhodes after an earthquake – the most famous example of royal *euergesia* in the hellenistic period). The Seleucids had, in theory and often in practice, the upper hand over the court since its members were dependent on royal favour for advancement via the king's disposal of a variety of royal gifts such as positions, fiscal immunities and land (cf. pp. 43-4; 47-8). Along with this went gifts of value both material and symbolic – gold and silver plate, the right to wear purple, a gold clasp, or a royal gem finger-ring (see Plate 4):

> The young Antiochus wrote to Jonathan confirming him in the high-priesthood, with authority over the four districts, and making him one of the King's Friends. He also sent him a service of gold plate, and gave him the right to drink from a gold cup, to be robed in purple, and to wear the golden clasp. (I *Maccabees* 11.57-8)

Note also in this context the great output of fine gold and silver plate in Macedon from Philip II, which is likely to be related to the spectacular development of the Macedonian court and the practice of royal gift-giving (Ellis 1980). The reverse of this, the fall from grace of a person of rank, was marked by the king publicly stripping the 'criminal' of these marks of royal favour:

> In a burning fury, he (Antiochus IV) immediately stripped Andronicus of the purple, tore off his clothes, led him round the whole city to that very place where he had committed sacrilege against Onias, and there disposed of the murderer. (II *Maccabees* 4.38)

It is important to remember that kings could, and did, revoke their gifts and could, and did, dispose of disloyal Friends (cf. the gruesome murder of Hermias at court at Antiochus III's instance, Polyb. V 56). It is well known that by the second century in the Seleucid kingdom a highly hierarchical court system had evolved – not perhaps to be explained mainly, as is usual, in terms of its 'decadence', but rather in terms of the fact that courts, like any bureaucracy, have their own dynamics of growth, and also as a deliberate mechanism in an increasingly pressurised world (e.g. the threat of Roman military expansion and the growth of Parthian power in the second century), intended to keep intact the loyalism of 'courtiers'.

The Seleucid kings operated a huge network of patronage, which was in effect a political system based upon personal relations between unequals, between the leaders (patrons) and their followers (clients); the latter give support, loyalty and deference, the kings protect and also give more positive favours, from hospitality to jobs. Royal 'gifts' entailed debts of loyalty and personal obligation: gifts did not come free, whether to individuals or to communities. It is, of course, a weakness of such systems that they are open to counterbids and so vulnerable.

The 'Friends' of the king were appointed and deployed by him in crucial roles – as generals, governors, ambassadors – and were structurally indispensable to the functioning of the monarchy, as their regular inclusion (at least in the third century) in descriptions of the king's powerbase indicates: 'King, Queen, our Friends and armies ...' (*OGIS* 219 ll. 21ff.). It is obvious, thus, that it is foolish to dismiss the 'Friends' as mere favourites of a king and so derogate the kingship. Nor should they be automatically dismissed as 'bad men', 'eminences grises', symptomatic of the reign of a 'weak' king. Some no doubt abused their power or influence. They are a feature of autocracy, not of the individual (weak) character of a king (such as, supposedly, Antiochus II). As Peter Burke has pointed out, they have 'a social role with definite functions' in courts, where kings needed both friends and unofficial advisers whose loyalty they could trust because their position was dependent on the king (Burke 1980, 51). The view, in Britain, of a prime minister such as Mrs Thatcher who personally weeded out dissenters and appointed 'yes men' is not that of a weak ruler.

The Seleucids had, at least in the third century, the reputation in old Greece of enormous wealth, enviable when compared with the poverty of ancient Greece (Plutarch *Agis* 7). Additionally, propaganda, as reflected in the works of Theocritus and Herondas for Ptolemaic Egypt, bolstered this view of the wealth of the new kingdoms. Unfortunately, it is not possible to gauge the real income and wealth of these kingdoms at any point. It is perhaps in the building by the kings (new

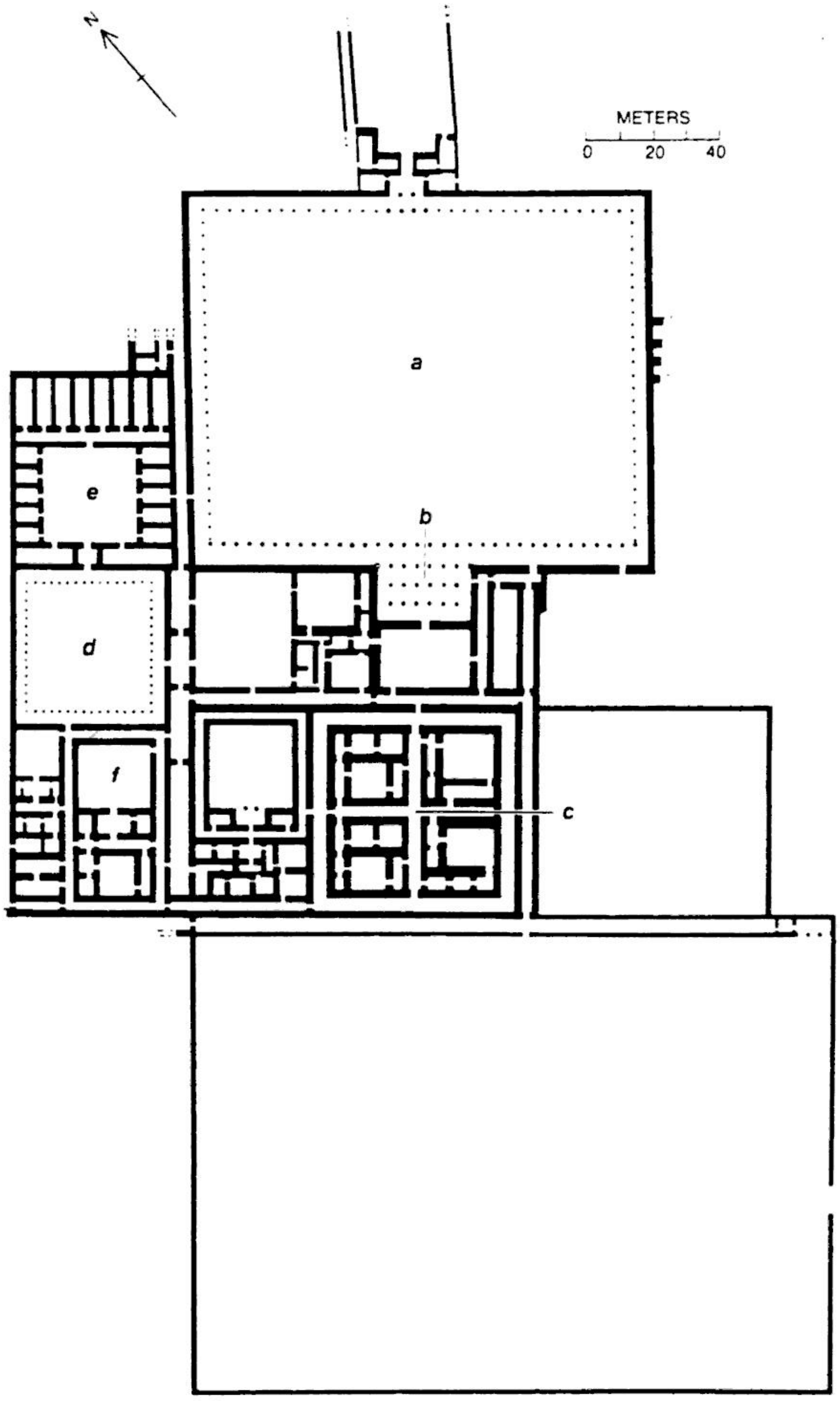


Fig. 8. The palace at Ai Khanoum; (a) large formal courtyard; (b) columned vestibule; (c) administrative building with reception areas and offices; (d) small courtyard; (e) treasury with store-rooms; (f) private apartments (after Bernard 1982b).

cities, for example), as well as in their patronage and funding of individual new and old monuments and institutions (temples, stoas, gymnasia, festivals in Babylon and other places) that the reality of royal wealth (and so of power and influence) was most tangible.

It is paradoxical that little of hellenistic Alexandria, for example, remains; the palace did not survive and we have no idea of its size, architectural style and mode of decoration (Greek and Egyptian influences?). For the Seleucid empire we are a little better informed. It is important to remember that the court was peripatetic, like that of the Achaemenids (Briant 1988a), before the loss of the Fertile Crescent in the later second century, and used several cities as 'capitals' or bases, from Sardis in the west, through Antioch in Syria, to Seleucia-Tigris in Babylonia, and Ecbatana and Susa in Iran (Boucharlat 1985, 74; 1990, 151-2). The excavations of Sardis show that it was transformed, under Seleucid rule in the third century, into a city with a Greek town plan and some characteristically Greek public buildings (cf. below pp. 180-3); but little of hellenistic Antioch survived the extensive building in the period of the Roman empire; and the hellenistic levels of Seleucia-Tigris have only been partially excavated (Oelsner 1986, 131-3; Downey 1988, 51ff.; Valtz 1988; 1990). It is possible that at Ecbatana (Strabo XI 13,5) and Susa (Mecquenem 1938) the Seleucids continued to use Achaemenid palaces, as Seleucus I did at Babylon before the foundation of Seleucia-Tigris. Even if the palace at Susa should prove to be a Seleucid-period construction, as proposed by Boucharlat (1990, 151), it used, significantly, Achaemenid-style architectural elements. A dedicatory inscription of *c.* 200 in Greek from Susa from a statue base incidentally attests that the Seleucids then maintained a court at Susa, which was also the base of the satrap of the region of Susiana. It is a dedication by the commander, officers and soldiers of the Seleucid garrison there (Sherwin-White 1982):

> Leon and the commanders under him and soldiers [honour] Arete, daughter of Timon, he in charge of the court of the king, and of Atheno. (*SEG* VII 4)

Inheritors of the Achaemenid empire and Achaemenid palatial architecture, the Seleucids did not reject this heritage. It is very significant that, from the first building phase, the palace at Ai Khanoum, which reached its greatest dimension in the early second century, was Persian in plan (cf. Bernard 1982b, 129; Colledge 1987, 143ff.; see Fig. 8). This fact is of great interest because it means that the old idea of Macedonian kings (and Greek settlers) insisting upon a purely Greek setting (with the cultural imperialist overtones of

modern colonialism that implies) needs modification. The Macedonians had, of course, models of palaces, such as Vergina and Pella in Macedon, to use had they so chosen (*pace* Bernard 1982b). By the early second century the Ai Khanoum palace was huge – the enormous size of the courtyard, ringed by four porticoes with 118 columns a side, and the building, which covered an area of 230 × 350 m, dwarfs the, by comparison, minuscule scale of the Vergina palace (cf. Andronicos 1972). Yet another way in which the power and presence of the Seleucid ruler was tangibly expressed, was the massiveness of the fortifications at these sites, particularly well represented at Ai Khanoum and Merv (see above pp. 82-3; Leriche 1980). The sheer grandeur of these structures, comparable in scale to some of the Achaemenid defences (cf. for example, Kandahar, see Helms 1982), shows a similar purpose in reflecting the active might of the Seleucid empire.

Loyalism and resistance

With comparatively rare exceptions (such as Posidonius speaking of the second century), the press the Seleucids received in the third century was overwhelmingly good. This seems largely to be a function of the literary genres which kingship generates: treatises on kingship, hymns for cult occasions, panegyrics, court histories (although not necessarily always favourable) and popular *logoi*, such as the stories about Stratonice and Hierapolis and Antiochus' lovesickness (cf. above p. 25; Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991). An interesting, though very fragmentary, piece of evidence showing that Seleucid history was read in Egypt in the first century comes in a well-written Berlin papyrus (from Abusir el-Melek). It refers to Antiochus I's accession to his father's empire (*patroia arche*), and the consequent voting of honours and crowns for himself and the dead king, apparently to ensure that this important event should be commemorated (P. Berol. 21286: W. Brashear, *A New Fragment of Seleucid History*; cf. also above p. 30).

Public civic inscriptions, as has been seen, memorialised only favourable images of the kings. Loyalism was also tangibly expressed through the Seleucid empire by dedications by Greeks as well as non-Greeks from the hierarchy (army, court, administration), of monumental votive statues dedicated to a deity or deities 'for the life of the king'. Comparable feelings of loyalty were expressed in the permanent bequests of slaves to sanctuaries by members of local urban élites:

> Aneramata, whose other name is Karatu, daughter [of] Artemidorus, wife of Tatedidusu, son of Hippanonikos(?), of her own free will has given to Anu and Antu in perpetuity Phaneia, her slave, daughter of

> Šipqat-^{d}Šušinak(?), Hatam-Anu and Min-Nana, her sons, a total of three slaves, for the life of Antiochus and Seleucus his son, the kings, and for the sake of her (own) life, for doing the work in clay and gypsum of the temples of the gods of Uruk. (YBC 11633 = Doty 1977, 87-9; date: probably between 189 and 186)

Autocracy requires assent, as Alexander's court quickly found. Free speech, openly expressed to the king (a Macedonian myth?) was not, in popular stories, tolerated at court, Seleucid or Ptolemaic. Only two anecdotes of the Seleucid kings' reaction to such 'plain speaking' are known: one concerns the murder of a philosopher by a second-century ruler, the other depicts Seleucus I's anger at an embassy from Heraclea-Pontus:

> Seleucus then resorted to threats in order to upset and frighten the ambassadors (from Heraclea) who had arrived. Only one, Chamaeleon, far from letting himself be intimidated by these, said: 'Heracles is the stronger, Seleucus!' (the Dorian word *karron* means 'stronger'). Seleucus did not understand the word, but he was still furious, and turned his back on them. (Memnon *ap*. Photius 224: 226a)

Graffiti or *libelli* (pamphlets) which may have expressed dissent and dissatisfaction have largely not survived.

Until now, it has been generally thought that surviving expressions of opposition to Seleucid rule are to be found in non-Greek material, from subjects of the Seleucid kings. In Babylonia, the 'Dynastic Prophecy' has been supposed hostile, but as we have seen (see above pp. 8-9 on the problems of interpretation), it is in fact more likely to be an expression of support for an early Seleucid ruler. Berossus, too, has been taken to convey covert criticism (Drews 1975), but his work can be interpreted as expressing a view positive to Seleucid rule (Kuhrt 1987a, 54-6; for discussion of the evidence for Fars, cf. pp. 76-7; Bactria, cf. pp. 108-10). Undisputed evidence of opposition comes from Judaea for the early second century in I and II *Maccabees* and the Book of Daniel (on the Maccabean revolt, cf. below pp. 226-8). At the same time we need to recognise that the picture is more complicated than a neat division between Macedonian/Greek acquiescence or support for, and non-Greek opposition or resistance to, Seleucid rule. With the exception of Iran-Persia, it is hard to believe that foreign rule as such was a *new* reason for resistance since the Achaemenid empire had already established a long-lived suzerainty over the peoples and places comprising the Seleucid empire. It is also possibly anachronistic (if fashionable) to expect opposition from subjects to empire and monarchy – the nexus 'oppression-rebellion' (as used, for example, by Eddy 1964) is, after all, an unsatisfactory simplification, as sensitively analysed by Levi:

> ... like the nexus imprisonment-flight, the nexus oppression-rebellion is also a stereotype. I don't mean to say that it is never valid: I am saying that it is not always valid. The history of rebellions, that is, of insurrections or revolts from below by the 'many oppressed' against the few powerful, is as old as the history of humanity and just as varied and tragic. There were a few victorious rebellions, many were defeated, innumerable others were stifled at the start, so early as not to have left any trace in the chronicles. The variables in play are many: the numerical, military and idealistic strength of the rebels and, respectively, those of the challenged authority; the respective internal cohesion and splits; the external assistance available to one or the other; the ability, charisma or demonic power of the leaders; and luck. Yet, in every case, one can see that it is never the most oppressed individuals who stand at the head of movements: usually, in fact, revolutions are led by bold, open-minded leaders who throw themselves into the fray out of generosity (or perhaps ambition), even though they personally could have a secure and tranquil, perhaps even privileged, life. The image so often repeated in monuments of the slave who breaks his heavy chains is rhetorical; his chains are broken by comrades whose shackles are lighter and looser. (Primo Levi *The Drowned and the Saved* (1986/1988), 129-30)

The scattered and mostly tiny pieces of evidence for possible resistance to the Seleucids need to be analysed each within its specific context, before conclusions about the precise nature of any opposition to the Seleucids can be established; in most cases the evidence is neither clear nor complete enough (Babylonia, Persis) to do so.

An interesting example of how Seleucid kingship appeared as a desirable (and imitable) form of government for subjects, is illustrated by the behaviour of the Apameans and other Greeks from Syria, enslaved in the second century during the wars with Rome and at work on Sicilian estates. Their charismatic leader, Eunus (he claimed, like Pyrrhus, healing powers), expressed his leadership in revolt by taking the diadem and royal title, choosing the dynastic name of Antiochus, and setting up court with a circle of 'Friends', on the model of the Seleucid kings familiar to him and his followers (D.S. XXXIV/XXXV 2,1-23). Similarly, the outcome of the Maccabean revolt was the eventual establishment of a hellenistic monarchy in Judaea, modelled on Seleucid kingship (cf. Hengel 1980, 123).

In any consideration of this question the lack of evidence for Seleucid political history after 281, aside from the reign of Antiochus III, must be borne in mind. It is only too easy to equate such a gap in documentation with an absence of important events. Such a temptation must be resisted. The recent publication of Babylonian astronomical diaries, for example, now reveals that in the period between 238 and 235 some kind of serious revolt was taking place, one of the centres being Babylon:

> That month (III/74), there was fighting in the area of the palace which is

> in Babylon [...] That month, on the 29th and 30th day, when the troops from the palace came out, with the guard-troops of the king [...]. (Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –237)
>
> That month (VII/77) ... [...] the chief (i.e. ?general) [...] many troops for fighting with one chief from the unit (?) [...] in the palace which had revolted against king Seleucus. (Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –234)

Precise understanding of the events here noted must remain obscure at present: are they connected with the War of the Brothers (*c.* 241-235) or do they refer to some other revolt? There is no sign that it is a local attempt at secession ('the oppressed rebelling against their oppressors') and may have been part of a struggle for imperial power between rival factions within the Seleucid court and army. But at the very least it is an important corrective to our image of Seleucid Babylonia, outside Seleucia-Tigris, as a quiet back-water in the third century little affected by wars and rebellions.

*

Historians (and modern politicians) are very much concerned with the questions how much the individual personality and ability of any one man (or woman) matters and how far it is appropriate to write history concentrating on individual rulers. In part, the debate arises from the methodological reorientation of history-writing, initiated by the French *Annales* school, which sought to study underlying continuities in society and culture, and in particular to look at the underside of socio-political history (see Burke 1990). It seems obvious, when the form of government is autocracy, that the individual wielding supreme power could and did make a difference. No king, however, is a one-man band. His free, arbitrary use of power is limited by many factors: by the traditions and rights his subjects possess (cf. above pp. 51-2), by the pressure of influential groups and individuals, by the need for his empire to work, as well as by the policies of his predecessors – in the case of foreign policy, continuity in Seleucid policy in theory and practice is well attested with regard to Thrace and the Arab-Persian gulf (see Chapters 1, 2 and 7).

An example of the kind of pitfall created by interpreting a piece of evidence in the light of assumptions made about the personal character and style of a ruler is the story of Babylon's surrender to Alexander the Great after the battle of Gaugamela (331). All the classical sources agree that Babylon offered no resistance, and one describes in some detail the ceremonial welcome extended to the conqueror (cf. also Sachs/Hunger 1988, no. –330). This has been seen by scholars as a pointer to the hatred felt by the Babylonians for the

Persian kings, and the spontaneous enthusiasm engendered by the prospect of 'liberation' offered by Alexander. More recent study, however, has demonstrated that the Babylonians (like others) had a long tradition of organising ceremonial receptions for successful conquerors about to approach the city, resistance to whom was likely to be futile (cf. also I *Maccabees* 10.86). So what looks at first sight like a spontaneous expression of joy for a particular individual, turns out to be a carefully stage-managed formal procedure only set in motion by the citizens after negotiations with the invading force in which the prospective new ruler's duties in relation to the city's traditions were agreed (Kuhrt 1990b). So similar formal welcomes offered by cities attested in the hellenistic period cannot serve as a guide to the real feelings the inhabitants may have had about a specific king and his apparent personal qualities:

> [Month x. In] that [month], the 14th day, [X] being his name (?), the brother of king Seleucus (III) [arrived] from [Apam]ea-on-the-Orontes, the camp of the king, from Syria, [in Seleucia], the royal city, on the Tigris and the King's Canal. [The satr]ap and the people of the land came out to meet him (and) they [made] music. (*ABC* 13b, ll. 11-14; restorations follow van der Spek 1985, 557; cf. Sherwin-White 1983a, 267-8)

An incident like this provides no insight into the precise feelings of the citizens of Seleucia-Tigris towards a member of the royal family. Rather this ceremonial reception fits into a well-established and recognised pattern of civic and royal obligations and expectations around which the relations of ruler and ruled were articulated – the personalities of individual rulers can never be recovered from such material.

CHAPTER SIX

Colonialism and Imperialism: aspects of the problems of 'hellenisation' and Greek interactions with non-Greek civilisations in the Seleucid empire

It has long been customary to search the middle east microscopically for any evidence of something Greek – almost to the exclusion of the existing cultures. Thus, for example, is the adoption of some loan word – in a commercial context say *kapelos* ('trader': for the loan word *QPYLS* from this Greek word in a Greek/Aramaic text about a loan (dated *c.* 277), see Geraty 1975, 55-6) – very significant? How significant and of what? We have done this for years, while also gradually coming to appreciate the overwhelming perseverance of non-Greek cultures and their practices. It is not that it is mistaken to look for Greek influences, but that the need is rather to try to recognise the evidence of the influences that various cultures external to a particular area may have, not privileging Greek culture. It is also important to try to reconstruct and understand the culture(s) of a particular place, which, in the case of the ancient near east, have often been open to manifold foreign cultural influences literally for centuries.

In terms of the 'Invention of Tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), it is perhaps that of modern ancient Greek and hellenistic historians, culturally determined and bound, ultimately, by concepts derived from European imperialism, to seek out and assume that the spread of Greek culture, like that of Europe (and within that of Victorian England) was self-evidently a 'good thing'. The age-old difficulty is to hold in balance and recognise (and learn about) the characteristics of each culture relative to its members and context; and also to escape the cultural imperialism that classical scholarship itself has in the past propagated, by regarding, explicitly or implicitly, as inferior non-Greek (and non-Roman) cultures (with the occasional exception of Judaism) and therefore seeing, as superior and good, a

spread of Greek culture (or Roman law), especially in 'oriental' places (cf. Bevan 1902, 16-17; Bengtson 1988, 184). Like most peoples, the Greeks were themselves splendidly assured in their ethnocentric and omnipotent perspective – if you were not a Greek, you were a barbarian (cf. Ethel Lina White, *The Lady Vanishes* (1937/1987), 60-1: 'I am going to remember that these people are only foreigners. They shan't impress me. *We're* English.'). Did they, therefore, deliberately impose a programme of political hellenisation on, and foster the adoption of Greek forms in art and literature by, their non-Greek subjects? In the hellenistic period, there is every reason to suppose that 'hellenisation' is an adjunct, not an aim, of imperialism.

The earliness and complexity of Greek cultural contacts with the non-Greek civilisations of Anatolia (e.g. Phrygia, Lydia and Caria) and the near east, and their continuance into the classical period, is one of the significant results of the more recent work of archaeologists and historians (see Helm 1980; Gunter 1990; for a brief conspectus, Colledge 1987, 134-8). It provides a tangible cultural context for the later spread of Greek political and military dominance, from the time of Alexander on into the hellenistic period, illustrating (as has so often happened to the 'great men' of history) that their 'work' is part of a cultural past and did not autonomously set off whole new cultural directions and influences. Alexander has now been set in a new context of pre-existing cultural interaction between non-Greek and Greek in Anatolia, in the Levant (e.g. Phoenicia) and areas further east (cf. Kuhrt 1987a, 50-1). We have already seen that the idea of Alexander's exclusive backing of Greek culture no longer stands up (cf. above p. 121).

Introduction to the question

The Greek city foundations of the hellenistic kings, and the question of their nature and functions, will be discussed first, before broaching the question of Greek interactions with the non-Greek civilisations of the hellenistic east.

There are, as ever, source problems. The sources are, first, literary – and these mainly late Greek and Roman authors – in various genres, ranging from stories in Appian to single-liners (for example Stephanus of Byzantium), or very late but more continuous descriptions, for example in Libanius, the veracity of which is dubious and applicability to the hellenistic period often unverifiable. There is a danger of taking these sources too seriously and at face value. The most important Greek source is Polybius, whose descriptions of major Seleucid cities – Seleucia Tigris, Seleucia-Pieria and Sardis, are invaluable. Secondly, there is archaeological evidence: excavations at Sardis, Seleucia-Tigris, Uruk and Ai Khanoum, for example, have been illuminating for

the hellenistic history of the cities; smaller sites, such as Failaka, in the Arab-Persian gulf (cf. below pp. 172-8), with epigraphic as well as archaeological finds, are particularly valuable. The Soviet excavations of sites such as Antioch-Margiana (modern Merv) and the Parthian capitals of Old and New Nisa have shed light on these places in the hellenistic period. Unfortunately at many sites – Seleucia-Pieria, Antioch-Orontes, Apamea, Dura-Europus – it has been mainly the Roman levels which have been available for excavation. Thirdly, there are odd, often surface finds, of an importance altogether beyond their apparent individual worth: e.g. a Seleucid inscription perhaps from Hyrcania (cf. pp. 81-2), a civic weight naming the Seleucid foundation of Heraclea-Mare in Syria (*IGLS* 1252), and the famous Greek inscription from Laodicea-Nihavend in Iran, which both attests the existence of and locates a 'Greek' city in Media (cf. pp. 74; 204).

A glance at the map (Fig. 1) demonstrates several important general points about the nature of the Seleucid empire. The first is the sheer number of foundations, mainly of third-century date (whether 'cities' or fortresses is often not clear), and secondly, above all, their huge geographic spread through the empire, from Anatolia, via Syria and the Fertile Crescent to Bactria and Sogdiana in the north and the Arab-Persian gulf in the south. Included on the map are also hellenistic sites where Greek material has been found, but whose Greek name (if they had such) is unknown. This enormous effort mirrors a fact of the Seleucid empire, namely that east and west alike were important to the central power. The exact chronology of many of the foundations is uncertain but enough is known from the combination of literary and archaeological sources to see that Seleucus I and his son, and successor, Antiochus I, were the most active founders – from Bactria to Anatolia (above pp. 20-1). Within the Fertile Crescent alone, seven Greek colonies are named at the end of the decree from Antioch-Persis (below pp. 163-4). Most of the time there is simply not the evidence to pinpoint the function(s) of a particular foundation except in the most general way, for example its strategic location on an important route or set of routes (Seleucia-Tigris, Laodicea-Nihavend, Dura-Europus, which filled the role of ancient Mari), or as in part 'frontier' sites (Ai Khanoum, Edessa (Seyrig 1970), and Failaka); and often foundations were added to existing settlements to continue and exploit their older purposes (Susa and Babylon: see below) and act as watchdogs. The colonial effort of the early Seleucid period seems part of the tremendous work of taking over and physically occupying the Achaemenid empire.

One theme, stressed for example by Walbank (1981), is the (apparent) homogeneity of the Greek civilisation of the colonial areas and of the Greek homeland – for which the hellenistic 'Greek' city, excavated at Ai Khanoum on the river Oxus in north-east Afghanistan,

is often cited as a paradigm. This city, originally founded under either Alexander or Seleucus I, was (rather fittingly) rediscovered on a hunting expedition by Mohammad Zahir Shah, when king of Afghanistan, and was carefully excavated by the French Archaeological Delegation from 1965-78. Certainly the material from Ai Khanoum, and from other new hellenistic sites in the middle east, is providing the stimulus for a new appraisal of the character of hellenism in the ancient east during this period. Older ideas of a 'fusion' (or synthesis) of Greek and 'Oriental' culture, with the overtone of an easy 'Instant Whip', are generally – and it seems rightly – now regarded as too crude to be of much use in analysing the complicated process of cultural change. Hellenistic historians have also learned from the modern experience of decolonisation that different cultures do not communicate as easily as older approaches once assumed. This sounder methodological approach underlies a current orthodoxy which tends to see the general pattern of contact between Greeks and non-Greeks as the juxtaposition or co-existence of Greek and non-Greek cultures with little interchange except to a limited extent in the case of local non-Greek élites (Préaux 1978; *RTP*; Musti 1984). This certainly offers a more realistic account of areas under direct Greek-Macedonian rule, where the general separateness of the Greek and non-Greek worlds has its historical basis partly in the social, economic, political and cultural cleavage characteristic of colonialism. However, it seems probable that, for the Seleucid empire, the complicated inheritance from the previous ancient near eastern empires, whose imperialism had fostered (through colonies, deportation, trade settlements) the co-existence of peoples of many different places within settlement areas (best attested in Babylonia: Stolper 1985, 72-9), also affected the realities of the situation. We should not fall into the Greek way of looking at the question – Greek or non-Greek – but rather as Greek, or Babylonian, or Persian, or Syrian, and so on – a multiplicity of cultures.

The approach to 'hellenistic colonialism' in this book is different from older approaches. Study of both Greek and non-Greek sources, primarily for example cuneiform texts, has made it possible better to understand the kings' approach to non-Greek cultures in this realm, where basically a government policy not of non-intervention but of active support (e.g. Olba, Babylon, Borsippa, Uruk) and government via local officials is attested. There was no global hellenising crusade, whether in Anatolia, Syria, the Fertile Crescent, Iran or Bactria-Sogdiana. Conversely, king, court and Greeks in the east were in some contexts externally acculturated, how deeply may be uncertain, to Mesopotamian and Iranian traditions, and in Babylonia the kings fulfilled the old traditional obligations of royalty. The administration was multilingual, using Aramaic as under the Achaemenids, and

Greek (Sherwin-White 1987) – there was no attempt to impose Greek as the 'language of administration' as has so often, and so wrongly, been claimed, adding thereby to the picture of a rigidly Greek central power. Aside from administration, non-Greeks, especially Iranians, continued throughout the dynasty to contribute vital manpower to the armed forces, whether on fortress duty (cf. pp. 55-6), or in the great armies gathered for the major set-piece battles (see Fig. 2).

The criteria of 'hellenisation' are usually seen to include not merely the adoption of Greek coinage, names, institutions and Greek words, but also Greek political practices, lifestyle, and literary, artistic and architectural ideas. What this means is not easy to say. And indeed, in the case of what is often called 'syncretism' – implying the emergence of some new creation from the interaction of two or more cultures – how often is this merely a sort of 'translation' or approximation into the appropriate 'language' of the other culture of some practice, rather than a new development (cf. p. 185)?

The evidence for cultural change (for example, non-Greeks 'hellenising') includes what points to fairly superficial changes, as well as to those of a more thoroughgoing character (socio-cultural, political) – these may involve an individual, a group or a state. It is important not to lump a lot of disparate things together and to recognise this complication in trying to assess the evidence that we have. By what sort of evidence can we recognise and 'test' cultural changes? The most convincing evidence is when an individual or community adopts the culture, language, religion and political practices of another culture. One of the most revealing illuminations of the process comes earlier (early fifth century) in Herodotus, who tells of the fatal love affair of the Scythian king Scylas with Greek culture:

> Scylas, likewise, the son of Ariapeithes, many years later met with almost the very same fate. Ariapeithes, the Scythian king, had several sons, among them this Scylas, who was the child not of a native Scythian, but of a woman of Istria. She herself taught him to speak and read Greek. Some time afterwards, Ariapeithes was treacherously slain by Spargapeithes, king of the Agathyrsoi; whereupon Scylas succeeded to the throne and married the wife of his father, whose name was Opoea. This Opoea was a Scythian by birth, and Ariapeithes had a son by her, called Oricus. During his (i.e. Scylas') reign over the Scythians, as he disliked the Scythian mode of life, and was much more attached, by his upbringing, to Greek traditions, he used to act as follows; whenever he brought the army of the Scythians to the town of the Borysthenites (the Borysthenites claim that they themselves are Milesians), he used to leave the army in the suburbs, and having entered the walls by himself, and carefully closed the gates, took off his Scythian dress and put on Greek costume, and in this attire he used to walk about the market place without guards or retinue. They guarded the gates, that none of the Scythians might see the king thus apparelled. Scylas, meanwhile, lived

exactly as the Greeks, and offered sacrifices to the gods according to Greek rites. Often a month or more would pass before he would change back into his Scythian clothes and depart. This he did repeatedly, and built himself a house in Borysthenes, and married a wife, who was a native of the place, for this. But when the time came that was ordained to bring him to harm, the occasion of his ruin was the following. He wanted to be intitiated in the rites of the Bacchic Dionysus, and was on the point of obtaining initiation into the rites, when a very great prodigy occurred. He had, in the city of the Borysthenites, a house of great extent and erected at vast cost, round which stood a number of sphinxes and griffins carved in white marble. Onto this the god cast a thunderbolt. It burnt to the ground. In spite of this, however, Scylas carried through the initiation ceremony. Now the Scythians criticise the Greeks for their Bacchic rites. They say that it is not reasonable to imagine there is a god who impels men to madness. No sooner, therefore, was Scylas initiated in the Bacchic rites than one of the Borysthenites went to the Scythians, saying, 'You Scythians laugh at us because we rave (i.e. are Bacchic) and the god possesses us. But now this *daimon* has seized upon your king too, and he raves like us and is maddened by the god. If you disbelieve me, come with me, and I will show you.' The chiefs of the Scythians went with the man, and the Borysthenite took them secretly to a tower. Presently Scylas passed by with the band of revellers and the Scythians saw him raving (in a Bacchic state). They regarded the matter as a very great misfortune. They departed and told the whole army what they had witnessed. When therefore, after this, Scylas was at home again, the Scythians put themselves under the protection of his brother, Octomasades, the son of Teres' daughter, and rose in rebellion against Scylas. (Herodotus IV 78-80)

This is a very important passage for us as an example of what processes and changes are involved in 'hellenisation' in the classical period. The Scythian ruler was the product of a mixed marriage between a Scythian king and a Greek woman (from Borysthenes). His *mother* taught him the Greek language. When he succeeded to the throne he remained emotionally attached to Greek ways, ambivalent towards Scythian customs and lifestyle (the Scythians were pastoral nomads: cf. Rolle 1989) and, Herodotus tells us, used to visit, for longish stays, the nearest Greek *polis* (Borysthenes, a Milesian colony), leaving his army (in camp) outside the city wall! The changes that he made, which Herodotus chose to describe, are: (1) external, the change of dress – from trousers, shirt and boots of Scythian type to Greek costume; (2) he behaved as a civilian and citizen – he abandoned his bodyguard; (3) he participated in Greek cultic religious practices (Herodotus had already described Scythian religious practices as he knew them – no temples, altars or images), culminating in his initiation into the Dionysiac Mysteries; (4) he took a Greek wife (Scythians, like Macedonians, were polygamous); (5) he built a house (presumably of Greek style), which he had decorated in contemporary

Greek fashion with marble sculpture (sphinxes and griffins). His eventual fate was a not uncommon one in such circumstances: his people rejected him for his adoption of foreign customs and killed him (cf. the Parthians' rejection of Vonones, eldest son of the Parthian king Phraates V, as an unacceptably Romanised 'Roman' stooge, in the reign of Augustus: Tacitus, *Annals* II 4,3-5).

The story shows (and is meant to show) the attractiveness of Greek culture (also its oddity!) for a 'barbarian' prince. It indicates some of the changes that the process involves: learning a new language, changing dress, housing, adopting new religious practices and acclimatising to *polis* life. It shows how ways of life can be identified through their visible symbols – language, dress, architecture, religion. The story is also evidence of a well-known phenomenon – cultural duality; certain individuals may adopt the rules and values of another society (often in the hellenistic period those of the dominant Macedonian Greek society) so long as they are with its members, but take up the traditions and values of their own society when they are back in their own cultural milieu, as Scylas did until his secret got out. One final point seems important in the case of Scylas: the role of intermarriage and of Scylas' Greek mother (typically unnamed) in his introduction to Greek culture – a valuable illustration of the sort of effect we can expect from the intermarriage of Greek and non-Greek in the Seleucid kingdom. It is obvious from Scythia (cf. archaeological evidence of the fifth and fourth centuries: Rolle 1989), and from other less exotic places, that the phenomenon of 'hellenisation' is not restricted to the hellenistic period, but was a continuing process ever since the earliest movements of the Greeks overseas, especially through trade and colonisation.

Examples of whole non-Greek societies hellenising in the way an individual such as Scylas did are rare in the hellenistic period (with the exception of western Asia Minor). Minority groups within a city, such as the 'hellenisers' at Jerusalem, wanted (or seemed to want) to develop Greek culture and possibly Greek political institutions. Individual communities, such as the Jewish Samaritans, may have known Greek and offered (in Greek sanctuaries) dedications Greek in style and language (Bruneau 1982), but their community and religion remained basically non-Greek. Even the Phoenician cities, exposed to Greek culture and influence for so long and enjoying a long commercial intercourse with cities of Mainland Greece and Greek islands, maintained characteristic Phoenician institutions and the Phoenician language, while imitating Greek-type decrees (Teixidor 1977, 1981; Millar 1983). The representation of non-Greek deities in Syria and Phoenicia with some Greek attributes is agreed to be a mechanism by which the character of local cults could be maintained. This external change was as temporary as the introduction of coinage by some

societies, previously accustomed to barter, in order to do business with the Greek powers and Greeks in the neighbourhood (cf. Salles 1987; Robin 1974), as has been seen to be the case with the tribes of the Arab-Persian gulf, whose coinage ended with the end of Seleucid rule.

Individuals (cultural exiles, or non-Greeks at court) might apparently participate more fully in Greek culture and life. A Persian named Boxus, for example, settled in Athens in the third or second century, adopted Greek culture and was clearly an educated man, capable of explaining in Athens, in the appropriate and familiar language of aetiology, the origin of the name of the Red Sea (Arab-Persian gulf; Agatharchides in Müller, *GGM* 1, 111ff. 5e; Burstein 1989, 43-5). Another, though somewhat different, customer is Berossus of Babylon: almost certainly a member of the Babylonian élite, deeply versed in Sumerian and Akkadian literature and learning, he wrote what seems, despite the very fragmentary state of preservation, to have been a sophisticated history of Babylonia in Greek, incorporating Greek philosophical concepts and using models of Greek historiography. The motive for composing the work in Greek was clearly in order to make knowledge of Babylon's important traditions and glorious past accessible to his king (Antiochus I) and to educated people in the empire (Burstein 1978; Kuhrt 1987a).

The monolingualism of hellenistic Greeks and their lack of real contact with eastern cultures has been emphasised recently (e.g. Momigliano 1975, chs. 1, 6; 1977, ch. 2). But this view is true of (and extrapolated from) the practice of the intellectual élite of Alexandria, Greek Asia Minor and Aegean Greece. Our evidence for the culture and intellectual interests of 'Greek' society in the Seleucid east is so scanty that we are in no position to assert Greek monolingualism, which was not practised by the Seleucid state, and cultural isolationism, to have been the rule. Indeed from Susa comes interesting evidence relevant to analysis of social relations in a specific part of the Seleucid empire. Excavation of the Seleucid levels at this site revealed in one area the Greek-Macedonian element apparently living side by side with non-Greeks and 'native houses with central courts which stood beside villas with courtyards having peristyles, tiled roofs adorned with terracotta acroteria and living rooms embellished with frescoes' (Ghirshman 1962, 102). With physical proximity of this order, it is hard to believe that no Greek in hellenistic Susa tried to learn Persian or Aramaic. Compare also the colony of Boeotians (late fourth century) in Sittacene, east of the Tigris river, who were described by Diodorus as bilingual (XVII 110,4-5). Note too the Lycian guide (son of a Persian mother and a Lycian father: Plutarch, *Alexander* 37), who spoke Greek and Persian; important as well is Diodorus (XI 60,4), on Cimon's campaign much earlier (470) in Ionia and Caria: 'So sailing with the entire (Athenian and allied) fleet to Caria, he at once succeeded in

persuading the cities on the coast, which had been colonised from Greece, to revolt from the Persians, but as for the cities whose inhabitants spoke two languages and had Persian garrisons, he had recourse to force and besieged them.' It seems from these pieces of evidence that Greek multilingualism was more common than has sometimes been suspected.

The case of Babylonia

Babylonia is a good case-study for examining the question of the impact of 'hellenism' in a region with an age-old culture of its own, because of the survival of hundreds of clay cuneiform tablets from Babylonian towns, dating from the hellenistic period, which attest continuities in Babylonian social, cultural and economic practices and traditions (cf. Oelsner 1986, for analysis of texts and sites; van der Spek 1987; Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991).

The most obvious observation datum is the general lack of hellenisation in Babylonian towns such as Uruk, Kish, Nippur and 'Babylonian' Babylon. Greek influence is mainly confined to the Seleucid administration, to the occasional adoption of Greek personal names, often in addition to (not replacing) Babylonian names (an age-old practice of adopting nomenclature from the new conquerors), the importation of Greek artifacts and the spread of Greek pottery shapes. Local dialects of Aramaic (and the use of other languages) continued to predominate. Temple architecture, where ascertainable, continued in traditional Babylonian style. This is a general impression. Now for more details and justification of these possibly provocative statements.

The case of Uruk is of prime importance. It is highly significant that not a single Greek inscription on stone, or graffito, or *ostrakon* of hellenistic date can with certainty be attributed to Uruk, the excavations of which have been extensive. This dearth is matched by the absence of the other usual signs of the presence of Greeks (Greek burial practices, Greek pottery, terracottas and other Greek artifacts), apart from some Rhodian amphora handles of the second century. There is little evidence in the cuneiform texts from Uruk of the impact of Greeks or their presence in Uruk (see below). The *bullae* from Uruk, bearing impressions of official stamps with Greek inscriptions relating to various taxes, can be discounted since they derive from administrative officials (Plate 5). They attest the Seleucid bureaucracy. The inscriptions of the stamps were in Greek because the royal administration used Greek, among other languages (Sherwin-White 1987). They do not, of course, imply a Greek or Greek-speaking population. Indeed, the language of the documents enclosed by the *bullae*, Greek or Aramaic, is uncertain. It has even been suggested that

Akkadian was used, written in Greek or Aramaic script (Oelsner 1986, 472 n. 904).

There is evidence in cuneiform texts from Uruk (and other places) of the assumption of Greek names by individuals at Uruk in the third and second centuries. By the end of the third century a number of people have Greek personal names and Greek patronymics, while others have a Babylonian name and a Greek name (Greek patronymic and Babylonian personal name, or *vice versa* (see van der Spek 1987; Sherwin-White 1983c). What does this evidence attest?

Another 'official' cylinder inscription of the hellenistic period (besides that of Antiochus I), in this case from Uruk, commemorates extensive building undertaken in the Bit-Resh sanctuary of Anu and Antum by the Seleucid governor (*šaknu*) of Uruk, a Babylonian named Anu-uballiṭ, son of Anu-ikṣur, son of Ah'utu. The inscription records that the king, Antiochus (II), titled 'king of lands', gave Anu-uballiṭ as his 'other name' the name Nikiqurqusu (= in Greek, the name Nikarchos). The best gloss on this particular process is a paradeigmatic passage in the book of Genesis, where Pharaoh's rewards to Joseph included the grant of an Egyptian personal name (*Genesis* 46:45: Rutten 1935, 70; cf. Vergote 1959, 149; Ray 1981, 159-60). Analogously, the programme of Nebuchadnezzar II for the assimilation of members of the royalty and nobility of Judah included new Babylonian names (Coogan 1974). The purpose, primarily political, seems the same; to reward and to assimilate people outside the ruling élite.

> In Nisan of Year 68 (244) of King Seleucus, Anu-uballiṭ, the son of Anu-ikṣur, of the Ah'utu family, *šaknu* (governor) of Uruk, on whom Antiochus, King of Lands, bestowed the other name Nikarchos, completely built the Reš(-sanctuary), the temple of Anu and Antum; the 'Exalted Gate', the great door, the socket of Papsukkal, the entrance to the Reš(-sanctuary), the great door, the socket of Nusku, the entry door, – two doors that open towards the north-east –; the 'Gate of Abundance'; the Gate that admits the produce of the mountains, – in all three gates, which open outwards; – seven courts, around the courtyard in which the 'Shrine of Destinies' is; the enclosure wall of the Reš(-sanctuary); the work-rooms; the cellae of the great gods and their courts. (He) constructed doors of sweet-smelling woods, fastened them to their posts, surrounded the temple with battlements, a gold bolt, a gold door-post he made and fixed to the outside of the 'Exalted Gate', for the life of Kings Antiochus and Seleucus he built (all this) in its entirety. On 8 Nisan he made Anu and Antum enter and caused them to dwell for ever in the cella Enamenna in their shrines; *ginû*- and *satukku*-offerings he established in there as earlier. (*YOS* I 52; cf. Falkenstein 1941, 4-5)

Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos, a Babylonian, governor of Uruk and in charge of building the central temple of Seleucid Uruk, was clearly a comparatively important figure for the Seleucids in Babylonia. For

exactly what services he had won the gratitude of the previous king, Antiochus II (261-246), is unknown. He happens to be the only known recipient of a Greek name from a Seleucid king, but there is no reason to suppose that he was unique. The practice of name-giving by kings had a continuing relevance for a foreign dynasty, particularly in the early years of its rule. How far the Seleucids, as Macedonian kings, made assimilation 'the condition for favour and advancement' (Momigliano 1979, 151) is uncertain.

Besides the political practice of royal name-giving, the other main way for an individual to acquire a Greek name was, as elsewhere, by the private and voluntary assumption of a such a name, or by the parents' choice of Greek names for their children. As is well known, the use of double names, by which a Greek name is coupled with a non-Greek name, becomes increasingly familiar from the later fourth century, as some non-Greeks in Greece and in the hellenistic kingdoms took Greek names in addition to their own non-Greek personal names (Sherwin-White 1983c, 212 n. 18). The 'hellenisation' of personal names is normally viewed as valid evidence for cultural hellenisation, since taking a new name is generally regarded as a serious act and as the external expression of some change in an individual's religious, political or socio-cultural position (e.g. Tcherikover 1959, 346-7; Hengel 1980, 62ff). This type of evidence, however, has recognised limitations because the degree to which an individual has been assimilated into another culture cannot be gauged on the sole evidence of nomenclature.

Babylonians had been accustomed to the use of more than one personal name long before the hellenistic period (Stamm 1939, 12ff., 111ff., 315ff.; for an analogous Egyptian practice, cf. Mélèze-Modrjzewski 1983; Briant 1988b, 166-7). Their use, in the Seleucid period, of double names, both of which were Babylonian, can be seen as a continuity with past practice. The nomenclature of one Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon, governor of Uruk at the end of the third century, displayed in an augural request of his, embraces most of the system's possibilities (McEwan 1981). He is named as 'Anu-uballiṭ whose other name is Kephalon who is called [...] in the mouth of the family, whose father and mother are known to you' (i.e. the god Shamash). His third name is a 'pet' or 'family' name, common in most human societies and used in ancient Babylonia (Stamm 1939, 11ff.). In the case of 'double names' some Babylonians in the hellenistic period put an older practice into use to accommodate a Greek name. The influence of the Greek-Macedonian ruling élite, reflected in the change in some Babylonians' choice of personal names, is well paralleled in the Achaemenid period when a number of Babylonians took Persian names (Dandamaev 1969). It is notable that, in the text referred to about Kephalon, his enquiry for an omen about the correct decoration

of a new statue of Ishtar, shows how little departure there is from traditional Babylonian religious practices.

But what is the further significance of the data from Uruk? The use of double names in the Seleucid period has, so far, mainly been attested in cuneiform documents only at Uruk. One result of the inevitable focus on Uruk was an assumption of a development unique to Uruk and in need of special explanation (e.g. Sarkisian 1976). At Uruk, apart from the instance of Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos in the mid-third century, double names with a Greek and a Babylonian element first appear only in the reign of Antiochus III. Additionally, a small number of people with Greek names and Greek patronymics begin to appear in cuneiform contracts from Uruk as principals, from the reign of Antiochus IV on (Aymard 1938, 36-7; Doty 1977, 155ff.).

It is problematic what is to be made of this evidence. Clay wrote of a Greek presence at Uruk, but at the same time recognised that there was little evidence of the hellenisation of the local socio-political system. Aymard adopted a similar position, stressing that the texts showed only the presence of a few isolated Greeks at Uruk. There is nothing to deny the identity as Greeks of these individuals, but, in view of the heterogeneous population of Babylonia, it would be foolish not to allow that some might be hellenised non-Greeks. The texts do not reveal the ethnic origin of these people, nor do their names, which are either common Greek theophoric names, names of kings, or Greek and Macedonian names in vogue at the time. Sarkisian, however, preferred a more elaborate interpretation in which he linked the appearance of double names with the emergence of Greek names and patronymics in cuneiform documents. He took the inception of double names with a Greek and Babylonian element, and the proposition of a Greek presence, to reflect a Seleucid policy of assimilation begun in the reign of, and by, Antiochus III (223-187) and continued by Antiochus IV (175-164). He posited a small Greek colony in Uruk from the beginning of Seleucid rule, juridically separate from the Babylonian city. The appearance of double names he treated as a result of a merging by Antiochus III of the Greek colony in 'the civic and temple organisational structure' of Uruk, which prompted Babylonians to take Greek names. This development, he argued, was followed by a third stage whereby the appearance of Greeks in cuneiform documents from 166 on is accounted for by the hypothesis of a further influx of Greeks to Uruk. There is little to justify this combination of two phenomena which are not only different but also, at Uruk, chronologically distinct. In the case of the Greeks in cuneiform texts, the recent publication of a new document from Larsa reveals men with Greek names and patronymics at Larsa already in the reign of Seleucus III (225-223: see *OECT* IX, 66 no. 26). Explanations of this 'Greek' activity clearly cannot be limited simply to the case of Uruk. It also has to be said that

the idea of an early Seleucid 'colony' at Uruk is perfectly in keeping with our evidence of general Seleucid policies.

In cases of what are, so far as can be seen, instances of the individual and voluntary acquisition of Greek names and/or giving children Greek names, other explanations are available. It seems easier to envisage the individuals taking these names as initiators of a trend, rather than to posit a royal policy radically changing the political and social scene. At Uruk, where comparatively full documentation exists, the fact that the career of Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon covers the precise period in which this pattern develops there, points to a simpler solution. He was the Seleucid governor of the city, at the end of the third century, and, in his inscription written on bricks to commemorate his building in the temple of Anu and Antum, stated his loyalty to Antiochus III 'in the month of Nisan, on the second day of year 110 (201), for the life of Antiochus, the king, my lord' (Falkenstein 1941, 6-7).

Position and philhellenism go hand in hand. Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon married a woman with a Greek personal name and patronymic and gave his sons Greek names. Greek names can be traced in his family over the next two generations. The reason why double names with a Greek element began at Uruk in Antiochus III's reign can be explained partly in terms of the career of Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon. The evidence may show that he sparked off a fashion for Greek names at least within his own family, which his children, perhaps half-Greek, followed. Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon and the other Urukeans with dual names are from the propertied families involved in business and in the temple and civil administration of Uruk. It is significant that only a limited number of families took Greek names (Doty 1977, 155-6); people who were sufficiently assimilated to be prepared to adopt a Greek name, or to see advantages in doing so – in other words, members of local propertied élites who in the hellenistic period practised a degree of self-hellenisation to preserve or acquire political rank.

The Greeks in cuneiform documents are a separate problem. Doty has recently placed their activity at Uruk in a clearer perspective, in the course of his important demolition of previous attempts to account for the continuance of cuneiform at Uruk (and in other Babylonian towns) for certain types of transactions free from royal taxation, at a time when business was also transacted in Greek (or Aramaic) subject to royal taxes and registered at the Seleucid public record office (Doty 1977, 151ff.; 308ff.). He has shown that the cuneiform documentation cannot be explained by hypotheses about the special category of the places and peoples involved, such as the theory that special privileges were conceded to temple personnel at Uruk, who were allowed to conduct business in a traditional manner, using Akkadian, and were granted exemption from royal taxation (Aymard 1938, 32-8); or

Sarkisian's theory of a civic and temple community, members of which supposedly had the privileges of exemption from royal taxation and also the right to use the traditional cuneiform legal system (Sarkisian 1969).

Doty's work has shown that the determining factor in the documentation of contracts in cuneiform was imperial fiscal policy (1977, 308ff.), by recognising two major changes in the pattern of cuneiform business documentation. First, from about 40 SE (272/1) transactions involving arable land were no longer recorded in cuneiform and in the decade SE 30-40 entirely new formulae for all land sales were adopted by scribes at Uruk. Secondly, no slave sales are documented in cuneiform after SE 37 (275/4). We know from (later) *bullae* from Uruk (and elsewhere) that contracts for the sale of slaves had to be registered with the Seleucid *chreophylax* (a finance officer) and a slave-sales tax and a general sales tax paid; we also know that the sales tax (*eponion*) was levied as a separate tax. Doty correlated and attempted to explain the two sets of data by positing a change in Seleucid fiscal policy, namely Antiochus I's imposition of a tax on slave sales and a general sales tax applicable to the sale of arable land (but not to urban real estate, which continued to be recorded in cuneiform contracts). Recent discoveries have shown the need for some modification to this approach, particularly because it is now known that the Achaemenids had already imposed a tax on slave sales (Stolper 1989), so it is unlikely that Antiochus I was actually introducing a new tax in the case of slaves. It is nevertheless clear that a reorganisation of at least some of the administrative aspects of taxation took place, viz. the substitution of parchment or papyrus for transactions concerning slave sales and sales of arable land, written in Greek and/or Aramaic instead of the cumbrous cuneiform, and registered with the Seleucid official (*chreophylax*). But this would have been little more than the culmination of a process begun in the Persian period. The fact that some Greeks, at different times in different places, began to participate in business transactions recorded in cuneiform, does *not* require their membership of a special social or political group, since there is no evidence of any restriction upon those participating. The only necessity was the possession of sufficient wealth.

That in the Seleucid period, energetic temple reconstruction and building were undertaken in the (Babylonian) sanctuaries of Uruk is attested directly by excavations, by cuneiform texts such as that of Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos (above), and indirectly by the recopying of temple building rituals, which are functionally related to this work (cf. *ANET* 339-42; Ellis 1968, 184; Thureau-Dangin 1921, 34ff.), though this is rarely stated or perceived. That such building required royal approval is certain and that it was funded, directly or indirectly, by the

Seleucid kings, inevitable (Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1991; see also below p. 182 on Sardis). Comparable was the British imperial government's involvement in Indian cult:

> ... the (British) Government believed it to be necessary, for the stability of their position, not merely to recognise the religions of the people of India, but to support and patronise them as fully as the native rulers had done ... Accordingly ... they took under their management and patronage a large number of Hindu temples. They advanced money for rebuilding important shrines and for repairing others, and paid the salaries of temple officials ... They granted large sums of money for sacrifices and festivals and ... on the occasion of the greater festivals ... government officials were ordered to be present and to show their interest in the celebrations. (J.N. Farquhar *Modern Religious Movements in India* New York 1915 (repr. 1980), 15, quoted in Boyce 1988, 26)

How far this 'building programme' should be interpreted as a 'revival', even 'renaissance' (Downey 1988), of Babylonian religious practices at Uruk is far more difficult to say, both because of the comparative lack of evidence from the later Achaemenid period at Uruk, and because earlier sanctuary buildings, such as that which the Irigal sanctuary of Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos replaced, have not actually survived (Oelsner 1986, 85-6). There is also the additional danger of falling into the old trap represented by the conventional view that Babylonia under Achaemenid rule declined and was regenerated by the Greeks (against this, see van Driel 1987; Kuhrt 1987c). Similarly, for Uruk, the dogma that it was wiped out by the Parthians during their annexation has now to be abandoned, following the publication of a cuneiform contract from Uruk, dating to 108 (Kessler 1984), which illustrates the intact state of the sanctuaries of Uruk in the early years of Parthian rule (cf. Oelsner 1986, 486-7; Sherwin-White 1987, 2). Temple architecture, where ascertainable, continued in Babylonian style. There really is very little evidence to support the notion that Uruk had a 'Greek' colony inserted, in contrast to Babylon. It is conceivable that the Antioch-on-the-Ishtar-canal, newly attested in a text from Uruk (NCBT 1942, l. 20 = Doty 1977, 193-4), was a Seleucid colony, though its location is unknown.

At Babylon our evidence attests a different state of affairs. Babylon was garrisoned under Alexander and during the late-fourth-century struggle for control of Babylonia and the Upper Satrapies. A Greek *ostrakon* (Plate 6), one of the rare finds of *ostraka* from the hellenistic period, discovered in the German excavation of Babylon, attests the presence of a garrison, under officers with Greek names (Sherwin-White 1982), datable to the early third century, probably to the second quarter. There is also some archaeological evidence of a Greek presence after Alexander. This includes the famous Greek theatre

dating from the early hellenistic period, refurbished several times under the Seleucids and later under the Parthians, Greek pottery, Greek amphora handles, Greek glass 'pastes' (copies of engraved gems) and many Greek terracottas. The theatre is in the central area of the part of the site known as Homera, which is situated inside the inner city wall on the east side of the city (see Fig. 9). This area may have been the location of the Greek community – a Greek Macedonian quarter (Koldewey 1913; Oelsner 1981; 1986, 123-4; Sherwin-White 1982; 1987, 20-1; but note the reported find of a house with a Neo-Babylonian plan there, date not given: *Iraq* 43 (1981), 181-2).

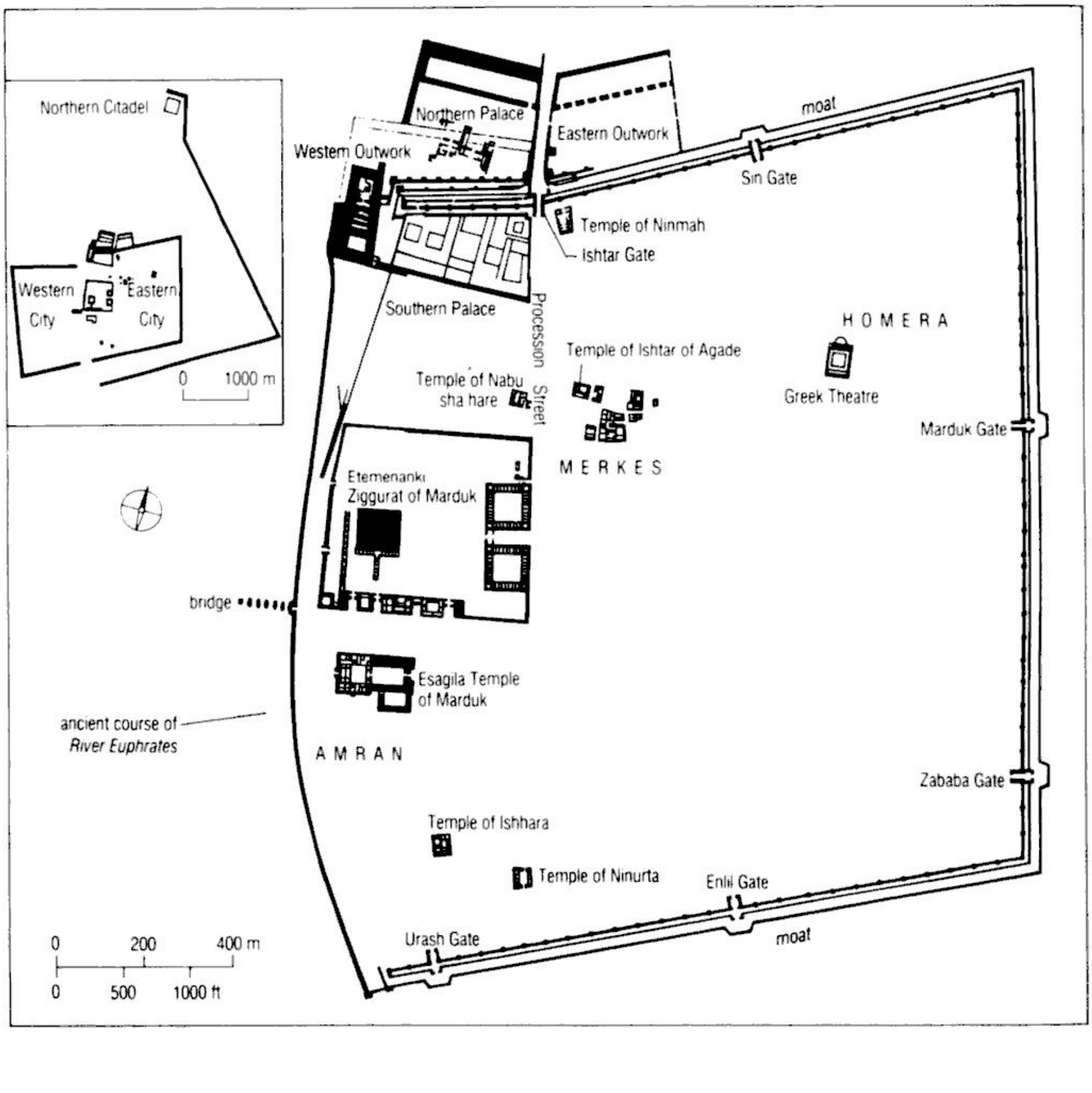


Fig. 9. Babylon (after M. Roaf *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia* Oxford 1990).

The (still) traditional view that Babylon became a Greek polis under the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (175-164) is accepted, for example, by Tarn (1938, 187-8), Rostovtzeff (1928, 188), Mørkholm (1966, 117-18) and Oelsner (1986, 125). This idea is based primarily on the Greek

inscription *OGIS* 253 (dated to the year of the Seleucid era 146 = 167/6 by the Macedonian calendar, 166/5 by the Babylonian: Plate 7):

> In the reign of Antiochus, g[od Manifest]. saviour of Asia and founder [and benefactor] of the city, year [1]46, [at the sacrifices? and] contest of thanksgiving [which were held at Daphne] on [the twenty-fifth day] of (the month) Hyperberetaeus, [to King Antiochus], god Manife[st, an altar] was dedicated [in the agora by] Philippus, son of Dia[——] in [the year 1]44 [...]. (*OGIS* 253; Burstein 41)

In view of a general assumption by modern scholars that *OGIS* 253 came from ancient Babylon, it is sobering to note the uncertain provenance of this famous inscription. This text, with *OGIS* 254 (a later dedication of an unnamed *polis* for its *strategos* and *epistates* (general and governor); datable on the basis of lettering to the first century BC or early first century AD: Plate 8), came from a dealer based in Baghdad, who sold them as coming from the vicinity of Babylon (Haussoullier 1901, 40-1; cf. Sherwin-White 1982, 65). On their content, as some scholars have long seen, these inscriptions could come from any hellenistic 'Greek' city of the middle east, including Seleucia-Tigris, the site of which had already been visited by nineteenth-century travellers. The hellenistic historian Bevan actually attributed *OGIS* 254 to Seleucia-Tigris (he did not make use of *OGIS* 253: Bevan 1902, 254). It seems important to re-emphasise that this pair of inscriptions was not, alas, dug up in the excavations of the site of Babylon. The provenance of both of these stones, whether Babylon, Seleucia-Tigris, Seleucia-Eulaeus, or another of the Greek foundations in Babylonia and Susiana, must in the circumstances be regarded as uncertain. Even if the origin of *OGIS* 253 from Babylon *had* been certain, the description of the Seleucid king as *ktistes* (founder) still could not prove that he was the actual founder of the city (Le Rider 1965, 37 n. 3). Hellenistic diplomatic language used the word *ktistes* in honouring a king for (often extensive) aid in the restoration and rebuilding of urban sites. The word need convey no more than substantial work in already existing *poleis* (van der Spek 1986, 71-3; 1987, 67-8).

However, later attestation of an organised Greek/Macedonian community at Babylon is provided by a clay tablet inscribed in Greek (Haussoullier 1909, 352-3, no. 1; *SEG* VII 39: dated 110/09), which comes from the period of Parthian control of Babylonia after Seleucid rule there had ended. The inscription is, interestingly, a list of ephebes and *neoi* (young men), winners of various athletic competitions. The tablet reveals the operation of a gymnasium for Greeks and Macedonians who are named with Greek and Macedonian personal names and patronymics. The existence at Babylon of a Greek theatre (see above), gymnasium and an agora, which Diodorus mentions only

in the context of its destruction by fire at the hands of the Parthian satrap Himerus (*c.* 126: D.S. XXXIV/V, 21; Sherwin-White 1982, 66 n. 59), probably does mean that the 'Greek' community at Babylon was organised as a *polis*, though there is no direct evidence of this.

Since the link between the Seleucid king Antiochus IV and the foundation of a *polis* at Babylon can be broken, a Greek foundation there could be considerably earlier, perhaps of the third century, when there is other evidence of a Greek presence (see above pp. 155-6). Although certainty is impossible, it is important to note the possibility that, as at Apamea-Silhu and Susa, a Greek colony, perhaps like these with the status of a *polis*, was juxtaposed in the third century alongside the local population. In support of this view is an honorific Greek inscription, of third-century date, for a Greek or Macedonian (*IG* XII (5) 715; Sherwin-White 1982, 67 and plate II b), evidently a VIP, as a benefactor and 'consul' (*proxenos*) of the Greek island of Andros. He is described as 'Babylonian'. Le Rider noted (1965, 37 and n. 3), 'We can therefore say that at this time the population of Babylon had a Greek element'. The point is that the honorand was an important person, Greek or Macedonian, for whom 'Babylonian' is, in a Greek inscription of this kind, a reference to his citizenship – Antiochene, Seleucid, of any other city – not his ethnicity – Cilician, Syrian, and so on, as in the case of slaves. We know from cuneiform documents that Babylon kept its old name in the Seleucid period. It is also possible that a Greek/Macedonian element, installed as a colony in the third century, was already then organised as a (tiny) *polis*, which was not given a dynastic name (Sherwin-White 1982, 69), but adopted the ancient name of the city.

The meaning of these various complex pieces of evidence may be that, within the third century, Babylon had a Seleucid garrison *and* a Greek/Macedonian community, known as 'Babylonians', whose members probably settled in the Homera area, leaving the archaeological traces that have survived. The picture of an earlier Greek settlement in Babylon than previously envisaged fits the wider perspective of Seleucid rule in Babylonia and in the Iranian satrapies, where (see above pp. 20-1; 74; 76; 82-4) the Seleucids backed up their power by the foundation of Greek cities and colonies during the third century. This was an important part of the installation of Seleucid rule. The use, referred to above (p. 157), of a clay tablet for recording a traditionally Greek type of document (a list of 'winners' of athletic competitions – in Babylon! cf. below pp. 174-6 on Failaka) is a small but interesting indication of borrowing from traditional Babylonian practices in documentation. Another instance of colonial Greeks' use of this traditional Babylonian writing material is attested by a clay tablet from Susa, of the second century (*SEG* VII 28), used to record a payment in Greek (Plate 9). This practice was probably much more

widespread in the Greek communities of hellenistic Babylonia and of Iran than is at present attested.

As we have seen, a few Greeks seem to have settled in Babylonian towns, for example in Uruk, and visited Babylonian towns for business (Sherwin-White 1983c, 219-20), but there was no deep impact of Greek culture, for example on the monumental, symbolic forms of architecture, on the way of life, on language in these places, or on Babylonian institutions (cf. van der Spek 1987). A characteristic text from Uruk illustrates local continuities in this period of the community, featuring various local professionals, such as the merchants (attested for the first time, here, in the hellenistic period), dyers and shepherds:

1. [... Uru]k, in the month Simanu (May/June), ye[ar ...]
2. [... sh]ekels of silver;
3. Rihat-Anu, descendant of Nabu-ušezib, 9½ shekels of silver;
4. Illut-Anu, the dyer, 4 shekels of silver;
5. Rihat-belet-ṣeri, descendant of Mannu-aki-Ištar, 9 shekels(?) of silver(?);
6. Ina-qat-Anu, descendant of Makka, the shepherd, 1 shekel;
7. Nadin, the shepherd, ½ shekel;
8. Nidintu-Anu, descendant of Anu-ahhe-iddin, the merchant,
9. [...] 4 shekels of silver, taken from what is at his disposal;
10. Total: 34
11. [...]
12. [...]-Anu, descendant of Anu-ba[lassu]-iqbi, ⅓ mina of silver;
13. [...]-nu, 10 shekels and ½ shekel of silver;
14. [Nid]intu-Anu, descendant of Anu-balassu-iqbi, [the shep]herd (?), 3 shekels;
15. [...]ah-ittannu, the merchant, 2 shekels [...] 1/12 (?)) of (?) a shekel (?);
16. [... To]tal: 26, 15,
17. [... ba]lance: 8 shekels silver, taken from the wallet [...]
18. (in Aramaic: 'not accountable'(?)). (YBC 13278 = Beaulieu 1989c, no. 3)

We must remember, in digesting such Greek input as there is, the early contacts of Assyria and Babylonia with Greece and Greeks from the late eighth century on (Weidner 1939; Helm 1980; Kuhrt 1982; Gunter 1990). A more general and less tangible process of influence is the 'speedy' adoption by the late fourth century in Mesopotamia of contemporary fourth-century Greek shapes for pottery, although traditional shapes continued (Hannestad 1983; cf. also the seals with Greek motifs appearing on late-fifth-century cuneiform tablets: Kuhrt 1987a, 50-1). Just as Mesopotamian traditional pottery continued in Seleucid Babylonia, in Drangiana and Arachosia too, local pottery traditions went on; furthermore external influences on pottery were

not exclusively (or predominantly) Greek, as, for example, the Indian influences on local wares from excavated sites in these areas show.

Rather later, from the second century, we see the use of Greek script to record Akkadian (and perhaps Aramaic) texts. So far, fourteen fragments from clay tablets have been identified, belonging to a mysterious group of documents known as the 'Graeco-Babyloniaca' texts (cf. Oelsner 1986, 239-44). What is remarkable about them is the use of Greek script to transcribe cuneiform and Aramaic texts (Plate 10); what is more, they show that whoever transcribed them was familiar with the usual styles of Greek script in vogue during the later second to first centuries (Sollberger 1962; Black/Sherwin-White 1984). To this collection can be added the 'Harvard tablet' (Geller 1983), which contains part of an incantation inscribed in cuneiform on the front of the tablet and Greek script on the reverse. These tablets seem to reflect very much the typical copying fare in the curriculum of an apprentice cuneiform scribe – passages from the encyclopaedic vocabulary ur_5-ra = *hubullu*, magical incantations and an excerpt from the work known as the 'Description of Babylon', which either simply had a more or less phonetic transcription into Greek characters (a 'crib') on the reverse, or used the Greek alphabet throughout. This choice of subject matter is significant in locating their origin within the milieu of 'classical Mesopotamian culture' (Black/Sherwin-White 1984). The question, still unanswered, is who wrote these various tablets with Greek (and cuneiform) script and why? Greek apprentices in Babylonian scribal workshops (so Pinches, 1902, 113; van der Meer 1938, 125), or Babylonians experimenting with an alphabetic system for writing Akkadian and Sumerian? If it was the former, this would certainly be revolutionary for current perceptions of the depth of Greek interest in foreign cultures as minimal (e.g. Préaux 1978, 545ff.). But it is important to stress that there remains much basic work to be done on the different areas of the Seleucid kingdom. Only then – if at all – can a general assessment be made of how far Macedonian-Greek rule fostered a rigidly oil-and-water relationship to the exclusion of absorption or intermixture (cf. p. 144 above).

One borrowing from Mesopotamian culture has been mentioned; Greek adoption of clay tablets as writing material for recording public documents (Plate 9). In the case of the 'Graeco-Babyloniaca' texts, it may on balance seem more probable that the writers were Babylonian scribes. At present a main function of the use of Greek script seems to have been to reproduce the contemporary pronunciation of Akkadian words, not to make a literal transcription of the traditional orthography (Pinches 1902, 109ff.; Sayce 1902, 125; Burkitt 1902, 144-5). An alphabetic system has obvious advantages over the cumbrous cuneiform, while the limitations of a syllabary present, or maybe only accentuate, scarcely soluble problems concerning

pronunciation or sounds of the language (Gadd 1956, 8). The changes in the pronunciation of Akkadian in the late Babylonian period give one powerful and specific reason for experimenting in the adaptation of an alphabetic script. Another aspect that needs to be explored is what further shades of meaning and function the cuneiform writing system may have carried, which would have been lost by the simple phonetic rendering of an alphabet (see Bloch 1989). This dilemma in interpretation is typical of some of our other sources for the study of cultural interactions in hellenistic Babylonia, for example the seal impressions, with Greek, 'Greek-Oriental' and non-Greek motifs, on *bullae* from Seleucia-Tigris and Uruk (Rostovtzeff 1932; McDowell 1935; Invernizzi in press). It would be mistaken to compare the so-called 'Gallo-Greek texts' in the west, in which Greek script was used to write Celtic (Duval 1958; Lejeune 1968-71; 1976-8), since there was no Celtic system of writing at the time.

Royal policies and colonial activity

The great number of Greek 'city' foundations by the Seleucids has been mentioned. Important questions and problems arise here – from the role of the king, the relations of the place founded to the central power (king), i.e. its obligations and rights, to how Greek in institutions, culture and population these places were.

There is no doubt of the direct, personal role of the king in the actual founding of some major cities (Seleucia-Tigris, Seleucia-Pieria, Syrian Antioch) and in re-foundations (such as Lysimachea and Sardis). This is not surprising in view of what was involved – the need for land (the settlements at Ai-Khanoum, Seleucia-Tigris and Antioch are known to have been on 'virgin' land[1]), finance and the supply of material resources disbursed from the royal treasury and from the king's estates at the king's dictat (compare the refounding by Antiochus III of Sardis (below pp. 181-3) and of Lysimachea (below p. 211)). The role of the king as founder may also be reflected in civic cults of the king as *ktistes* (founder), though care is needed here (cf. above pp. 156-7), and in

[1] This is not to imply that these regions were being agriculturally and commercially exploited for the first time in the hellenistic period. It is likely that Seleucia-Tigris replaced nearby ancient Opis (for its location, see Black 1987, 19 and 21) as the city dominating the terminus of the important Khorasan route; moreover, a small settlement existed previously. The view that only with the foundation of Ai Khanoum did this area develop has been destroyed by the finding of an irrigation-system and an Achaemenid fortress (*RTP* 247). Antioch-Orontes was established in a region known to have been politically and economically important in the second millennium (the kingdom of Alalakh, Woolley 1953), as well as the first when it formed the small kingdom of Pattina (Unqi), which was turned into the Assyrian province of Kinalua/Kullania in 738 (*RLA* 6/3-4, s.v. Kullani(a)). What was different, in all three instances, was the creation of a large new city that came to function as the prime political and economic focus of the area.

the personal role of the king in ensuring the supply of manpower for a colony and seeing that this was maintained (e.g. Antiochus I at Antioch-Persis; cf. below pp. 163-5) and in regulating that of even very small places, such as Failaka (below pp. 174-8). The overarching control of the king in regulating the foundation of colonies and his personal role are well attested, both directly and indirectly.

We know very little about the realities of 'civic life' and politics in these new foundations of the middle east, or indeed elsewhere. Even the basic civic institutions are attested for only a very few cities of the Seleucid empire from Syria eastwards. There is variation, although how this is to be interpreted is questionable. Certainly some 'political' activity of the 'citizen body' is presupposed, e.g. at Seleucia-Pieria, Laodicea-Mare, Laodicea-Nihavend, Antioch-Persis, from references to the *demos*, or *polis*, in royal letters and civic decrees, to whom letters, or orders, from the king or royal officials, are addressed and therefore read out, perhaps debated, and ratified. In several of the surviving Greek inscriptions from the cities, the latter simply endorse the king's requests – the cities of Babylonia and Susiana from the Upper Satrapies, of whose names, listed at the end of a decree of Antioch-Persis, seven are partially or fully preserved, ratified the request from Magnesia-Maeander concerning the recognition of a new penteteric festival for the local cult of Artemis. In this case only one of the decrees of the middle eastern cities, that of Antioch-Persis, was published in the temple archive, along with the royal letters of Antiochus III and of his son Antiochus. The choice of this decree for publication is probably to be explained by the fact that Antiochus III was in Antioch-Persis when the ambassadors from Magnesia had their audience with him, and also by the ties of kinship between Magnesia and Antioch, whose population included colonists from Magnesia requested by Antiochus I. In this and other examples, such as the ratification of the appointment, at Antiochus III's request, of one of the 'Friends' (*philoi*) of the king (*RC* 44; 189; cf. also above pp. 43-4), as a chief priest (*archiereus*) over the cults of Apollo and Artemis Daittae and of the other sanctuaries at Daphnae, the king's demands are duly ratified. The mechanism is documented especially clearly in the series of inscriptions from Magnesia-Maeander, which illustrate well the king's overriding authority in implementing policy:

> King Antiochus (III) to the Council and People of Magnesia, greetings. Demophon, Philiscus and Pheres, the sacred ambassadors (*theoroi*) sent to us by you to announce the contest and the other celebrations voted by the people in honour of Artemis Leucophryene, the patron goddess of your city, met us at Antioch-in-Persis, handed over the decree and spoke themselves with enthusiasm in accordance with the terms of the decree, urging us to recognise as 'crowned' and 'isopythian' the contest which you are celebrating in honour of the goddess every five years. Since therefore

> we have had from the beginning the friendliest disposition towards your people because of the goodwill it has shown to us and our interests in all circumstances, and wish to make clear our policy, we recognise the honours you have voted to the goddess, and intend to increase these in whatever respects you invite us or we ourselves think of. We have also written to those in charge of affairs (i.e. governors and officials) so that the cities may recognise (the celebrations) in the same way. Farewell. (*RC* 31; *OGIS* 231; Austin 184)

The king here says that he has sent orders to his satraps and other officials to be communicated to the cities (*poleis*) to secure the adhesion of the latter. There is no leeway left to the 'cities' – or indeed to the king's son, Antiochus, whose own letter was also inscribed and published:

> King Antiochus to the Council and People of Magnesia, greetings. Demophon, Philiscus and Pheres, the sacred ambassadors (*theoroi*), sent by you to my father to announce the contest and the other celebrations voted by the people to be held every five years for the patron goddess of your city, Artemis Leucophryene, delivered the decree addressed to me also and spoke with enthusiasm in accordance with its contents, urging me to recognise as 'crowned' and 'isopythian' the contest which you are celebrating for the goddess. Since my father has the most kindly feelings towards your people (*demos*) and has given his approval in this case, wishing myself to follow his policy, now I approve the honours voted to the goddess by you and in the future shall try, following my father's example, to aid you in furthering them in whatever matters you summon me or I myself think of. Farewell. (*OGIS* 232; *RC* 32)

It is worth noting, *en passant*, that only Antiochus III uses the royal 'we'; his son and co-regent does not.

The decree of Antioch-Persis, chosen as exemplary by Magnesia, is worth citing for the valuable information it incidentally provides about the Greek constitution and institutions of this Greek colony on, or near, the Arab-Persian gulf and its incorporation in the contemporary religious and social life of a Greek city of Asia Minor, and also for its importance as evidence of the chain of royal control that the Seleucids developed.

> (Decree) of the citizens of Antioch in Persis. In the year in which the priest of Seleucus Nicator and of Antiochus Soter and of Antiochus *theos* (god) and of Seleucus Callinicus and of King Seleucus and of King Antiochus (III) and of the son of King Antiochus was Heracleitus, the son of Zoes, first six-month (period of office), decisions of the main assembly, which were recorded by Asclepiades, the son of Hecataeus, the son of Demetrius, the secretary of the Council and of the People, month Pantheos, third day before the end of the month; resolved by the People, the *prytaneis* introduced the motion. The citizens of Magnesia-on-the-Maeander, being kinsmen and friends of the People (*demos*; i.e. of

Antioch-Persis) and having performed many conspicuous services on behalf of the Greeks of the sort which lead to good repute, both formerly when Antiochus Soter, being zealous to strengthen our city, which was named for him, wrote to them concerning a colony, they voted fine and notable decrees and, offering prayers and sacrifices, sent an adequate number of men who were distinguished for their excellence because they were eager to assist in strengthening the People of Antioch; and (now) preserving their goodwill towards all the Greeks and wishing to make clear that to all their kinsmen they give a share of the libations and sacrifices and of the other honours, which relate to the divinity (*to theion*); because a revelation has been granted to them, they have declared through all Greece that they will celebrate, in honour of the foundress of their city, sacrifices and a festival and a truce and crowned games every fifth year – musical and athletic and equestrian – (thus) returning just thanks to their benefactress. They have sent as ambassadors to the People Demophon, son of Lykideus, Philiskos, son of Philos, Pheres, son of Pheres, who, on appearing before the Council and the People, duly handed over the decree of the Magnesians; and, after renewing their kinship and friendship, they recounted at length the goddess's *epiphaneia* and the services which the Magnesians have furnished to many Greek cities, and they urged that we recognise the crowned games which they will celebrate in honour of Artemis Leukophryene in accordance with the oracle of the god. (Since these things are so), the People, because it reveres the gods common to it and the Magnesians and desires to increase its goodwill toward its kinsmen and [many] other cities, [which have decreed these same things ...] (and) especially because it thinks it ought not to pass over any suitable occasion on which, both to each individually and to all in common, it might demonstrate the zeal which it continues to have for the advantage of the Magnesians; with good fortune, it has been resolved by the Council and the People, that they praise the Magnesians for their piety toward the divinity and for their friendship and goodwill toward King Antiochus and the People of Antioch, and because, by using well their own advantages and the prosperity of their city, they will preserve their ancestral constitution (*patrios politeia*). Prayer shall be offered by the priests to all the gods and goddesses that the Magnesians maintain for all time in good fortune their constitution. Further, recognition shall be accorded to the sacrifice and the festival and the [sacred truce and the wreathed games as equivalent to the Pythian] – the musical [and the athletic and equestrian – which the Magnesians] will celebrate (in honour) of Artemis Leukophryene because of the ancestral [...] and the citizens of Antioch shall also send sacred ambassadors to Magnesia to sacrifice to Artemis Leukophryene for the safety of the king and of both the cities, and they shall receive a travel allowance from the public fund in the amount which the People shall determine by vote (to be) sufficient and proper for the city. The sacred ambassadors shall be chosen on the [... of the] month of Herakleios, [when other governmental offices] are filled, and those [chosen shall be sent] from the common hearth of the People. The sacred ambassadors, who come from Magnesia to us shall be given by the treasurers from the public fund gifts of hospitality such as are given also to [embassies] from rulers and cities. The sacred ambassadors shall join in sacrificing ... [to Artemis Leukophryene] the [...]. Those citizens who shall be victorious in the contests of the Leukophryenia shall

> receive the same honours and benefits from the city as [those who have been victorious in the Pythian games] receive according to the law.
>
> Similar resolutions were also passed by the Seleucians on the Tigris, the Apameians near the (river) Sellas, the Seleucians by the Erythraean Sea, the Seleucians near the (Eu)laios (Susa), the Seleucians by the [...], the Antiochenes [by ...], the Al[exandrians ...]. (*OGIS* 233; Austin 190; Burstein 32)

There were various mechanisms that the central power utilised to limit the power of these cities in the kingdom. In a number of cities a royal official titled *epistates* (usually translated as 'governor': literally 'being in authority over') is attested, for example at Seleucia-Tigris (Polyb. V 52), Laodicea-Nihavend (Robert 1949, 5ff., cf. below p. 204; Austin 158); and Seleucia-Pieria (*RC* 45; *IGLS* III.2.1183; Austin 176). Although no *epistates* is referred to in the decree from Antioch-Persis, it would be foolish to suppose that a Seleucid governor was not present. Indeed his absence in this decree is perhaps due to the fact that in the normal chain of command (cf. Laodicea-Nihavend and Failaka, p. 174), provincial governors passed on royal instructions to the local royal officials, who relayed these to the city under their authority, to the governor and the city authorities conjointly (cf. pp. 204-5). It used to be thought that this system of 'governors' was not used in Asia Minor (supposedly attuning to the sensitivities of the 'Greek cities'; Holleaux 1942, 217ff.). But caution is needed since the appointment of a royal *epistates* in charge of the Artemision, the great sanctuary of Amyzon (in time of war), in Caria, has been attested in a new inscription (*Amyzon* 15; *c.* 198). This governor, Menestratos, played a key role in negotiating with the viceroy, Zeuxis, and with other Seleucid officials, the execution of policies crucial for the citizens' future, including the repopulation (*synoikismos*) of Amyzon, numbers of whose citizens had evidently fled in the upheavals of war:

> The People decided, proposal of the *prytaneis*; since Menestratos, son of Agathocles of Phocaea, appointed *epistates* of the Artemision, has given many demonstrations of his goodness (*kalokagathia*) with regard to all the interests of the People, writing to Zeuxis (the official) in charge of affairs (the viceroy of Seleucid Asia Minor) concerning the *eunoia* (goodwill) that he continues to have both towards the kings and for Zeuxis, writing frequently too to Nicomedes and Chionis, the governor of Alinda (using an alternative phrase), attesting similarly about the goodwill of the citizens. He was also concerned about our belongings (*aposkeue*) retained at Alinda for us to get them back. He works perfectly also on behalf of the rest of our citizens dwelling in the autonomous cities, inviting them to the repeopling (*synoikismos*) of the Artemision and does not cease to be accommodating to those of the citizens who have dealings with him. In order that the People show that it renders thanks to worthy men, good fortune, the People of Amyzon decided: to praise Menestratos for the attitude he has towards the People; for him to be

> *euergetes* of the People; to give him citizenship, the right of property ownership and to participate in the cults, magistracies and all the other rights the Amyzonians enjoy in every way; that these same privileges belong to himself and to his offspring ... (*Amyzon* 15, 5ff.)

The decree also attests a governor in place at Alinda. How permanent or temporary these officials were is simply unknown, but they do indicate the degree of direct control that could be imposed, as was felt necessary, by the central power. Besides the royal *epistates*, royal authority was also represented by royal garrisons.

The civic institutions of the newly founded Seleucid cities varied. This may have a correlation with the composition of the population – i.e. where the proportion of Macedonian colonists was 'strong' (Seleucia-Tigris: Polyb. V 52ff.; Seleucia-Pieria: *RC* 45; Austin 176) a specifically Macedonian institution called *peliganes*, or 'council of elders', is attested. At Antioch-Persis, as is usual in Greek cities of this period, besides the assembly of full citizens, a representative council (*boule*) was used, composed from the male citizens, possibly with a property qualification, a board of magistrates and six-monthly rotation of office. Inevitably the Seleucid king's authority limited the 'autonomy' of his civic foundations.

In the decree from Amyzon, we actually find the citizens indirectly contrasting the status of Amyzon with that of the 'autonomous cities' in which their fellow citizens have taken refuge – this in the context of Seleucid supervision of resettling Amyzon. Louis Robert has rightly pointed out that in the Seleucid empire citizens of 'subject cities', as also therefore of royal foundations (i.e. Seleucid colonies), were not free to leave (*Amyzon* 191) – a crucial central policy for maintaining the populations of royal foundations. This policy has a clear precedent in that of Alexander, as exemplified by his colonies in Bactria, whose inhabitants obviously did not possess the right of movement (on the revolts of Greek colonists in Bactria see above p. 9); note also Antiochus III's provision (Polyb. V 54,8) for having rebel troops from Molon's army escorted back to Media, among whom were, besides local peoples, Greeks and Macedonians. It is likely that a ban on the freedom to leave of colonists existed also in the earlier Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid empires.

The question of the treatment of non-Greek cities as compared with that of Greek cities is basic to any analysis of the policy of the kings. There is no evidence that 'Greek' cities were preferentially treated; for example, tax-wise they were no better or worse off than non-Greek places; secondly, they too faced military service in times of war; thirdly, they had garrisons; fourthly, they had governors as well; fifthly, they too were subject to royal authority, as represented by the king and his officials, as documents illustrate.

Apart from the difficult question of whether there is any positive royal push to impose Greek culture and institutions on non-Greek places and peoples (cf. above pp. 149-61 on the Babylonian cities), it was inevitable, first, that the mere presence of new cities, with Greek-speaking elements in their populations and with Greek institutions and social practices, would rub off on local populations, or upon certain groups within them, through inevitable everyday contacts, and secondly, that there would be a variety of reactions to these influences.

A faint indication exists of some sort of 'hellenising' process triggered off by Seleucid military colonies. These colonies, called *katoikiai*, consisted of men settled by the kings, often with families, in places of military and strategic importance, which they had to guard and where they had (in theory) to support themselves from land (*kleroi*) granted to them by the king. In some cases these were composed of detachments of different ethnic origin. Thus the Persian detachment at Magnesia-Sipylus was to be included in the offer of citizenship at Smyrna (cf. *OGIS* 229; Austin 182). The relevance to this question of the parchment contracts (bilingual Greek/Aramaic)) of late date (Parthian period), discovered in a cave in western Iran, at Avroman, is more problematic. They are from a community thought, with some probability, to originate from a former Seleucid military settlement, occupied in the later period by soldiers of Iranian descent. Avroman was in a mountainous frontier area, which the Seleucids would have been right to watch. It lies in the Zagros mountains near the modern Persian border with Iraq (the old border with Ottoman Turkey: see Minns 1915, 22, whose description of the location of Avroman not surprisingly needs some updating), some 75 km as the crow flies from modern Sanandaj (old Sinna/Sineh, which was the capital of the province of Kurdistan), and some 125 km in a direct line from Kermanshah (on the Seleucid presence here see p. 204; cf. also Plate 11). The main route north, to Media Atropatene, goes through this area, hence its added strategic importance to the Seleucids. The bilingual documents may also indicate the lingering of the Seleucids' pluralistic approach to the use of languages in administration and the originally multi-ethnic composition of the colony, and may not indicate very much about the Greekness of the inhabitants in the Parthian period, or indeed originally. Compare the 'Myso-Macedones' in Mysia, Anatolia, who may similarly have originated from an originally mixed (ethnically) military colony (Pliny, *NH* V 120; Magie 1942 I, 972).

The ethnic composition of the population of Ikaros (Failaka, off Kuwait), and of the Seleucid settlement(s) there (see Fig. 10), is potentially of considerable importance for the general understanding of Seleucid colonising policies. The occupation of the island and the gulf region generally in the Achaemenid period is documented by

literary sources, but has not yet been much illuminated by archaeological exploration of the island (Salles 1987; 1990; Potts 1990:I, 322-3, 331-2, 350-2, 390-2, 394-400). It is possible, despite contemporary turmoil in this area, that excavation will in time reveal more about the size and material character of the sanctuary-centred settlement which Alexander's explorers described, and which passed not long afterwards into Seleucid control. The presence also of a non-Greek element on hellenistic Ikaros is reflected in the material finds from the hellenistic sites, being inferable from the presence of artifacts of traditional Mesopotamian style as well as objects imported from Mesopotamia and perhaps from Susiana (Mathieson 1982, 15-16, 17ff., 39ff.; Hannestad 1983, esp. 11, 79, 103-4; Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985), from a non-Greek (perhaps North Arabian or Aramaic) graffito, and perhaps too from the relative rarity of Greek objects at the settlement called F5. Yet the presence of Greeks is indicated above all by two Greek inscriptions (Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985; cf. Plates 12a and 12b), dating to around the end of the fourth or early third century (lettering), one a dedication of a garrison commander and his soldiers to Zeus Soter, Poseidon and Artemis Soteira, and the other an altar dedicated 'to the gods' by 'those from Ikaros'. Since the Seleucids drew upon non-Greek peoples within the empire, as well as on Greeks, for their colonial settlements, any colonists sent to Ikaros are likely to have included non-Greeks too, hellenised to varying degrees; cf., for example, the Greek and Iranian military garrison at Magnesia-Sipylus, referred to above (*OGIS* 229, esp. 100ff.) and Antiochus III's dispatch of Jews from Babylonia as colonists to Lydia, in Asia Minor (Josephus, *AJ* XII 149; see above p. 55). What is of interest is that, as at Susa, there was no physical segregation of the population in the settlement known as F5, as the archaeological discoveries importantly demonstrate. The mingled cultural traditions of this comparatively small hellenistic settlement are well reflected in the material finds. This discovery provides an interesting counter-example to a current view of the relationship between Greeks and non-Greeks, in areas under Macedonian rule, as one of juxtaposition and segregation (e.g. Préaux 1978, 545ff.; 587ff.). This model is too simple to apply *in toto* to the settlements of the Seleucid empire, where such variables as manpower, function and place combined to produce different patterns. It is worth noting also, that royal policy in this text (cf. below p. 174) observed no distinction juridically, as regards the rights of inhabitants.

Much ink has been spilt over the question of the composition of the population of the new foundations and the relationship of this to citizenship and rights. To what extent is it, for example, appropriate, or on the other hand anachronistic, to talk of the ghettoisation of non-Greeks in these places and of their inferior status? Certainly, at

Antioch-Charax there is a tradition that Macedonians had a quarter of their own; Strabo records that in his day Antioch was divided into four parts (XVI 2,4). Thus, one quarter was founded by Seleucus I for the colonists moved from Antigonea; one quarter was inhabited by Euboaeans; another, Strabo notes, 'was founded by the multitude of settlers (*oikeotoron*)'. There seems no reason why these cannot be identified as Aramaic-speaking Syrians (cf. Jones 1940, 242-3; Downey 1961, 940), rather than as Greeks and Macedonians (Grainger 1989, 98), but, equally, why could this quarter not have included several ethnic groups? Even where specific ethnic quarters were favoured by the inhabitants, this does not entail that the rights of the inhabitants were necessarily differentiated. Many modern European cities have districts known as 'Chinatown', or there is the Algerian quarter in Marseilles, or the Turkish quarter in (West) Berlin. But these have developed for a variety of socio-economic and cultural reasons, and are neither enforced nor required by the state (for evidence of patterns of settlement grouping, according to kinship interests, in Babylonian cities cf. Stone 1987, esp. 126-7). Still, it needs to be emphasised that, in the majority of cases in the Seleucid empire, we simply do not know either the relative composition of the population or the status of different ethnic groups. In some cases, evidence, although late and not necessarily correct for the early Seleucid period, attests that the population was mixed – Greek and non-Greek (Edessa: Malalas XVII 418); and in places like Failaka, as we have seen, Greek/hellenised people lived with local inhabitants, both equally subject to the king's rulings. Our view is that this question is a red herring, the product partly of hellenocentric history, and also of modern misunderstanding of ethnic groupings in the composition of ancient near eastern cities, onto which are projected the racism that was characteristic of nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism. After all, the Macedonians had no tradition of discrimination: from the foundations of Philip II of Macedon onwards, non-Macedonians and non-Greeks were incorporated in the citizenship of a place. New hellenistic cities, such as Stratonicea in Caria, were founded from local Carian villages; interestingly, Laodicea-Lycus developed in the area where two villages, one, from its name Kiddios (Kiddioukome), evidently a non-Greek settlement, and the other (Neoteichos – Newfort) probably settled by Greek immigrants, were located. In 267 they issued jointly a decree, which does incidentally attest hellenisation at village level, besides being perhaps another example of a 'mixed settlement', from which the later city (Laodicea-Lycus) was founded:

> In the reign of the Kings, Antiochus and Seleucus, forty-fifth year, month Peritios, when Helenos was overseer (*epimeletes*) of the *topos* (district), an assembly having been held, it was resolved by the inhabitants of

> Neoteichos and of the village of Kiddios. Since Banabelos, the manager of the estates of Achaeus, and Lachares, son of Papus, the accountant of the estates of Achaeus, have been their benefactors, on all occasions and both publicly and privately they aided every individual during the Galatian War; and since, when many had been taken prisoner by the Galatians, by revealing it to Achaeus, they [ransomed them], they shall praise them and inscribe their benefaction on a stone *stele* and set it up in the sanctuary of Zeus in Babakome and in that of Apollo in Kiddioukome. They shall also grant to them and their descendants for all time a front seat at the public festivals and they shall sacrifice to Achaeus, the lord of the *topos* and their *soter*, yearly in the sanctuary of Zeus a bull and to Lachares and Banabelos, their benefactors, two rams in the sanctuary of Apollo in Kiddioukome, three sacrificial victims (in all), in order that others also may know that the inhabitants of Neot[ei]chos and of Kiddioukome, with regard to those from whom they have received some benefit, understand how to award honours in return. (Wörrle 1975; Austin 142; Burstein 19)

Imperatives of manpower alone dictated the need for the deployment, use and incorporation of non-Greeks. Furthermore, the function of ethnic quarters in places can be depoliticised since socio-cultural, economic and ordinary human emotional needs encourage members of the same ethnic group voluntarily to be drawn to live in the same residential area, without this always being a policy of deliberate segregation (and debasement) imposed from above. In the case of Babylonia, its demography for the past two hundred years of Achaemenid rule had been a mosaic of settlements of different ethnic groups within the various Babylonian towns (Dandamaev/Lukonin 1988).

We are not yet (and may never be) in a position to generalise safely, but there is much more evidence than previously existed of the ways in which the Seleucids relied upon, and played to, non-Greek populations – at least to the élites – but not only to them. The preoccupation derives, in part, from the obsession of modern ancient Greek historians with the classical Greek *polis*, which usually had a unitary citizen body (unitary in the sense of hereditary origin from one *polis*). In the east, from the time of Alexander (as in a number of pre-classical Greek colonies), the Greek element in a (new) city was heterogeneous in origin, and in the Seleucid empire there is no reason to doubt that non-Greeks were regularly included. The Macedonian monarchy was not exclusive with regard to colonies: there is good reason to dismiss much of this as the harvest of hellenocentrism and of anachronism.

Seleucid colonies: literary representations and archaeological remains

What the new cities in the east looked like, and therefore what they

symbolically and culturally represented is usually, with the major exception of Ai Khanoum in Bactria, impossible to say because of the incompleteness, non-publication or impossibility of excavation of the hellenistic levels; this is, for example, largely true of the Syrian sites. However, from Polybius, quite incidentally, can be elicited a description of Greek elements shaping parts of several cities, such as Sardis, the important capital of Seleucid rule in western Asia Minor, in the third century. Polybius' description of the siege of the city (and citadel) by the king, Antiochus III, mentions incidentally, but very valuably, basic Greek facilities such as a theatre and a hippodrome (Polyb. VII 15-18); of these only the theatre has been 'placed' archaeologically and dated to the early third century. Thus Polybius securely attests for this former capital of the Lydian kingdom and old Achaemenid centre of the satrapy the existence of basic institutions of the 'Greek way of life'. It is archaeology that reveals, very importantly, how after the devastation of Antiochus III's siege, the city was redesigned and in part laid out on the so-called Hippodamian plan (Hanfmann 1983).

Polybius also gives a lovely and precious description of Seleucia-Pieria, a city founded by Seleucus I in Syria, which represents it as a typical sea-side Greek city, as strongly fortified as Greek cities of 'old Greece' and, of course, as other Seleucid city foundations (*pace* Grainger 1989, e.g. 86-7: strong fortifications were *not* unique to Syria):

> As soon as the decision had been taken (to retake Seleucia-Pieria, the founder and almost sacred hearth (*hestia*) of the *dynasteia*), Antiochus (III) ordered his admiral Diognetus to sail to Seleucia, while he himself, leaving Apamea with his army, came and encamped at the hippodrome about five stades from the town. He sent off Theodotus Hemiolius with a sufficient force to Coele-Syria to occupy the narrow passage and protect him on that side. The situation of Seleucia and the nature of its surroundings are as follows. It lies on the sea between Cilicia and Phoenicia, and above it rises a very high mountain called Coryphaeum, washed on its western side by the coastal waters of the sea separating Cyprus from Phoenicia, but overlooking with its eastern slopes the territory of Antiochenes and Seleucians. Seleucia lies on its southern slope, separated from it by a deep and difficult ravine. The town descends in a series of broken terraces to the sea, and is surrounded on most sides by cliffs and precipitous rocks. On the level ground at the foot of the slope, which descends towards the sea, lies the business quarter (*emporia*) and the suburb defended by very strong walls. The whole of the main city is similarly fortified by walls of very costly construction and is splendidly adorned with temples and other fine buildings. On the side looking to the sea it can only be approached by a flight of steps cut in the rock with frequent turns and twists all the way up. (Polyb. V 59; cf. 60-1,2 for the successful completion of the recapture of Seleucia)

There is no evidence whatsoever to support the notion (Grainger 1989, 84) that Seleucia never recovered its early importance after its capture by Ptolemy III in 246. Indeed Polybius describes vividly its strategic importance (offensive and defensive) to the Seleucid empire in his account of the planning of Antiochus III's campaign to regain this city (V 58; see also the inscription on local royal cults for the Seleucid kings from Seleucia (*OGIS* 245; Austin 177) dating to the reign of Seleucus IV).

Further east, local influences have been detected, for example in architecture, but assessment is usually hard because of the incompleteness of the excavations. Thus, at Dura-Europus, the Seleucid-period architecture is little known partly because the development of Dura, under Parthian and Roman control, wiped out the earlier remains of the Seleucid period, and partly, too, because not all the hellenistic period excavations, such as those of Rostovtzeff in 1936-7, or Brown's before him, were published (Leriche *et al*. 1986, 12). Dura, strongly fortified and laid out on the Hippodamian plan, seems to have had houses of Greek architectural style and decoration, but the Seleucid-period temple of Zeus Megistos has been related to the two Mesopotamian-plan temples of Ai Khanoum (Perkins 1973; Downey 1988, 76-86), though unlike these it was given a Greek appearance by the use of, for example, a Doric entrance porch. Recently, the second-century palace of the citadel, which was rebuilt around the second quarter of the century, has been compared to the mixed Greek-Achaemenid plan of the Ai Khanoum palace. How un-Greek a spectacle third-century Dura-Europus actually presented, we are not, alas, in a position to say.

The Seleucid levels of the vast site of Seleucia-Tigris have barely been excavated beyond the uncovering of the so-called 'administrative block', perhaps a palace, and a later building, possibly a *heroon* of the second century (Downey 1988). However, what is worth stressing as an indication of difference from Greek cities (cf. also above p. 136) is the huge size and great scale both of Seleucia-Tigris, by comparison with Syrian Antioch (cf. Will 1990), and of Ai Khanoum. If a complex of buildings at the site of Tell Umar (at Seleucia-Tigris) is of Seleucid (and not earlier) date, the probable identification of it as a sanctuary of Mesopotamian character (possibly a ziggurat) is significant, situated as it is right in the middle of a Seleucid royal capital (Downey 1988)! That this would not indeed be extraordinary is perhaps suggested by the presence of the non-Greek temples at Ai Khanoum and the mixed Greek-Achaemenid plan of the palace there. Important in this context are the excavations of the island of Failaka (Fig. 10), precisely because it is one of the few hellenistic sites of the east to have been properly excavated. The island is small, some 11.5 × 5 km, lying about 13 km off the coast of Kuwait, at the northern end of the Arab-Persian gulf. The

Danish excavations from 1958-63 excavated a mound and a block of buildings a short way south of the tell. These excavations discovered a small fortified settlement (F5), with two Greek temples and a complex of extra-mural buildings, including a terracotta workshop at the site F4. The Greek dedicatory inscription, referred to above (p. 168), and a Seleucid text were discovered in the course of the Danish excavations. Later, in 1983, a joint French and Kuwaiti archaeological team, under the direction of Jean-François Salles, conducted excavations on the island in the same area, and found a new hellenistic sanctuary (B6), outside the walls, by the present coastline (Salles 1984). In addition, this team excavated at Tell Khazneh, the findspot of the first Greek find from Failaka – the early hellenistic inscription attesting a Seleucid garrison (cf. p. 168), which no less a traveller than Freya Stark had relayed to the English epigraphist, Marcus Tod, for publication.

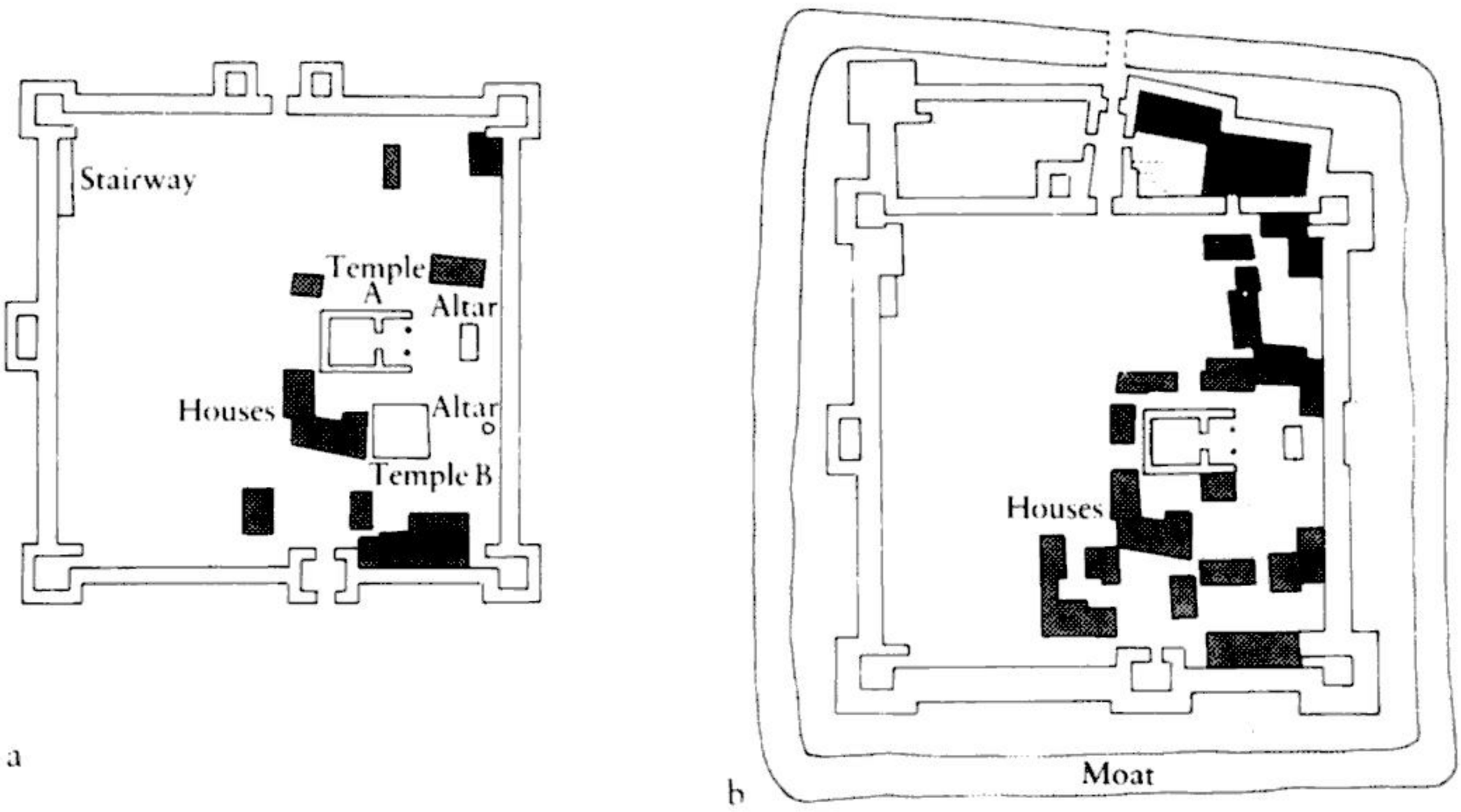


Fig. 10. Hellenistic settlement at Failaka; (a) original site; (b) after modifications (after Potts 1990).

The site at Tell Khazneh turned out to be another sanctuary. It provides an important missing link in the history of the island because, unlike the other sanctuaries at F5 and B6, it was occupied in the Neo-Babylonian and/or Achaemenid period, thus confirming the historical tradition of a pre-Greek sanctuary on the island. During the hellenistic period the sanctuary continued in occupation until approximately the end of the second century; it was, therefore, in existence for the first of the two main phases into which occupation of the site F5 is at present divided (from the early or middle third century

to about the end of the second century). The original building of the sanctuaries at B6 and the settlement F5 are thought by Salles to be approximately contemporary, but B6 may have been abandoned earlier than F5, perhaps in the middle of the second century, since no find from it needs to be dated later than the reign of Antiochus IV. Thus, for at least a century (and perhaps more) within the third to second centuries, as many as three hellenistic sanctuary sites, and one secular complex of buildings (F4) existed on the island.

The Greek and non-Greek material evidence has already been mentioned (above pp. 167-8). The valuable Seleucid inscription (Plate 13) found in the excavation of the site F5, and originally set up in front of one of the two temples of the site (Plates 14-15), gives precious information relevant to Seleucid colonial policies. It contains a letter from the satrap, probably of the satrapy of the 'Districts of the Red Sea' (the Arab-Persian gulf), to the Seleucid official in charge of the Seleucid administrative subdivision Ikaros belonged to, or perhaps the governor of the island, who passed on to the inhabitants the contents of the letter:

> Anaxarchus [to the] inhabitants of Ikaros. Greetings. Of the letter [which] Ikadion [wrote] to us we have a copy [for you] below. As [soon as you receive the] letter, (5) inscribe [it on a *stele* and] place [this] in the temple. [(Year) 109 (= 204)] Artemision [2]7. Farewell.
>
> Ikadion to Anaxarchus. Greetings. The king is concerned about the island of Ikaros because his *progonoi* also consecrated land (10) and decided to move the temple of the Saviour Goddess. And they wrote to the officials in charge of administration (instructing them) to move it. But they, either [perhaps] because they were prevented or indeed for some [other] reason, (15) did not move it. But we, when the king wrote to us, moved [it? promptly], and we established [...] an *agon* (contest) both sporting and [cultural,] wishing to carry out the policy of the king (20) and of his *progonoi* (ancestors). As to the people settled in the island – both the *neokoroi* (people in charge of the temple) and the others [...]? around [...] of the Saviour God, ?and those [...?when] the island [?was ...] they were included in the settlement [...?] they should not (25) encroach on this [...] in any way but are to leave alone [...]. So let it be your concern [to ensure that] men obtain their rights and are not wronged [by anyone] or moved. [And if] some of these wish (30) to [?acquire property] on the island, designate land [which,] when they have cultivated and planted (it) [they will own] as a hereditary possession. Let [them also have] freedom from taxation just as the *progonoi* [of the king] granted them (35) [for whatever (goods)] they export to the island; but [?to the region of Ar]abia do not allow [?anyone to export corn or] anything else. If [... of] what is due [...] ?sales, in order that (40) they should not fall [?into ill-health ... Order] (them) therefore to inscribe [this] letter and [to set it up] in the temple (Year) 109 (= 204), Artemision 17. Farewell. (Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985)

The two documents contained in this text illuminate, indirectly, the

question of the status and character of the settlements on Ikaros. The subordinate character of the community emerges first in the fact that the king communicates his orders for the island through his officials. The people are subject, and the land (*chora*) is the king's, as is implicit in his orders for its distribution. Whatever type of social organisation the inhabitants belong to, they are not organised as a *polis*. The lack of civic structure emerges in several ways: first, from the form of address Anaxarchus employs in his covering note, which is directed simply to the inhabitants collectively, instead of to a board of magistrates and/or to some other representative body such as a *boule* or assembly. Secondly, the inhabitants (*oiketai*) do not possess the hall-mark of a Greek *polis* – a city ethnic by which they could be addressed. Thirdly, the physical constraints of the settlement F5, at about sixty metres square, demonstrate that the place was not built as one of the new Seleucid *poleis* (*pace* Cohen 1978, 44). There is no evidence for any administrative organisation on Ikaros other than that of the cult (or cults) on the island (cf. Potts 1990: II, ch. 4).

The original location of the *hieron* (sanctuary) which was moved – presumably to F5 – remains unclear. Certainly Alexander's explorers learned of a sanctuary and cult of a goddess ('Artemis') on Ikaros in the pre-Greek period. But where this, or the cult of Soter, was localised, whether at the Achamenid site at Tell Khazneh, or yet somewhere else, is uncertain. One of the motives behind the move is likely to have been protection, since F5 was fortified by a circumference wall of mud-brick resting upon a base of irregular blocks of rock. The unplanned and irregular disposition of the houses filling the area around the two temples suggests that the site functioned as a fortified settlement, rather than as one of the 'true forts' characteristic of the hellenistic period, which were designed with regularly laid out barracks to serve primarily as a military base for troops. The main objective would appear to have been to provide a fortified protection for a (new) sanctuary, and room for a community to dwell around it.

The Seleucid kings' policy of support for the religions – Greek and non-Greek – of the peoples within their empire is becoming ever more fully documented, as in this text. The cult (or cults) of the two temples (A and B) were housed in a structure that is recognisably Greek in plan, architecture and decoration. At least one Iranian feature, the use or re-use of bell-shaped column bases of Persian design (Plate 14), reflects the building tradition of the larger region; but the moved cult's new home, probably unlike the old, was basically Greek in physical appearance. The establishment of an *agon*, probably accompanied by cultural competitions as well as athletic, was an integral part of the royal policy with regard to the sanctuary (ll. 16ff.), and was therefore perhaps partially intended to celebrate, in normal Greek fashion, the re-organisation. The Seleucid kings' promotion – indeed imposition – of

a specifically Greek cultural practice to create a recognisably Greek style of life for the Greek and hellenised inhabitants of their empire to share in is beautifully encapsulated in this image of a Greek *agon* celebrated on a very small island, under the blazing sun of the Gulf region (cf. also above p. 169). The reaction of the inhabitants to a decision in which, it appears from this text, they had no say, is not recorded, at least explicitly. It is unlikely to have been entirely favourable. The ethnic composition of the population of Ikaros, and of the Seleucid settlement(s), is of considerable importance for the general understanding of Seleucid colonising policies. The Seleucids drew upon non-Greek peoples within the empire as well as on Greeks for their colonial settlements; any colonists sent to Ikaros are likely to have included non-Greeks too, hellenised to varying degrees (cf. pp. 166-70).

It appears from this text that Ikadion is concerned to protect the rights of the (local) population settled on the island, by ensuring that they attain their 'rights', and by protecting them against injustice or removal (expropriation, expulsion, or even being carried off as slaves). Members of this group are to be granted an allotment of island land (*chora*) with hereditary leasehold – as attested in other Seleucid colonies – if they want to farm it. Two main points emerge. First, a section of people on Ikaros have suffered in the ways prohibited in ll. 24-6 and 26-8. The second issue is the cultivation of the island *chora*. Two main interpretations are possible. Either, (a), the policy of making land grants and leaseholds to the local population has not been implemented properly in the past, and is now to be put fully into operation. This could refer to a distinction (and now conflict) between Seleucid colonists who had been granted land, and local inhabitants whose livelihood, apart from tending the cult(s), will have come from fishing and from any trade that the island's position as a staging point and watering place created. Or, (b), the plan to promote the cultivation of the island by land-grants was new, or – if 'ancestral' – was being implemented now for the first time. The oppression of members of the population might be a long-standing problem; but it is perhaps more likely, in the light of other contemporary evidence, to be a recent development, linked either with the move of the sanctuary or, more probably, with the influx of a new group. This could be new colonists (hence the promotion of agriculture) sent to reinforce the Seleucid hold on Ikaros, or a more temporary influx of soldiery connected with the military operations that Antiochus III's Arabian policy had engendered in 205. Ikadion's letter seems clearly to attest a reorganisation of the Seleucid settlement on Ikaros on the king's initiative, although essential details remain problematic.

What is also of very great interest is that there was no physical segregation of the population in the settlement F5, an important fact

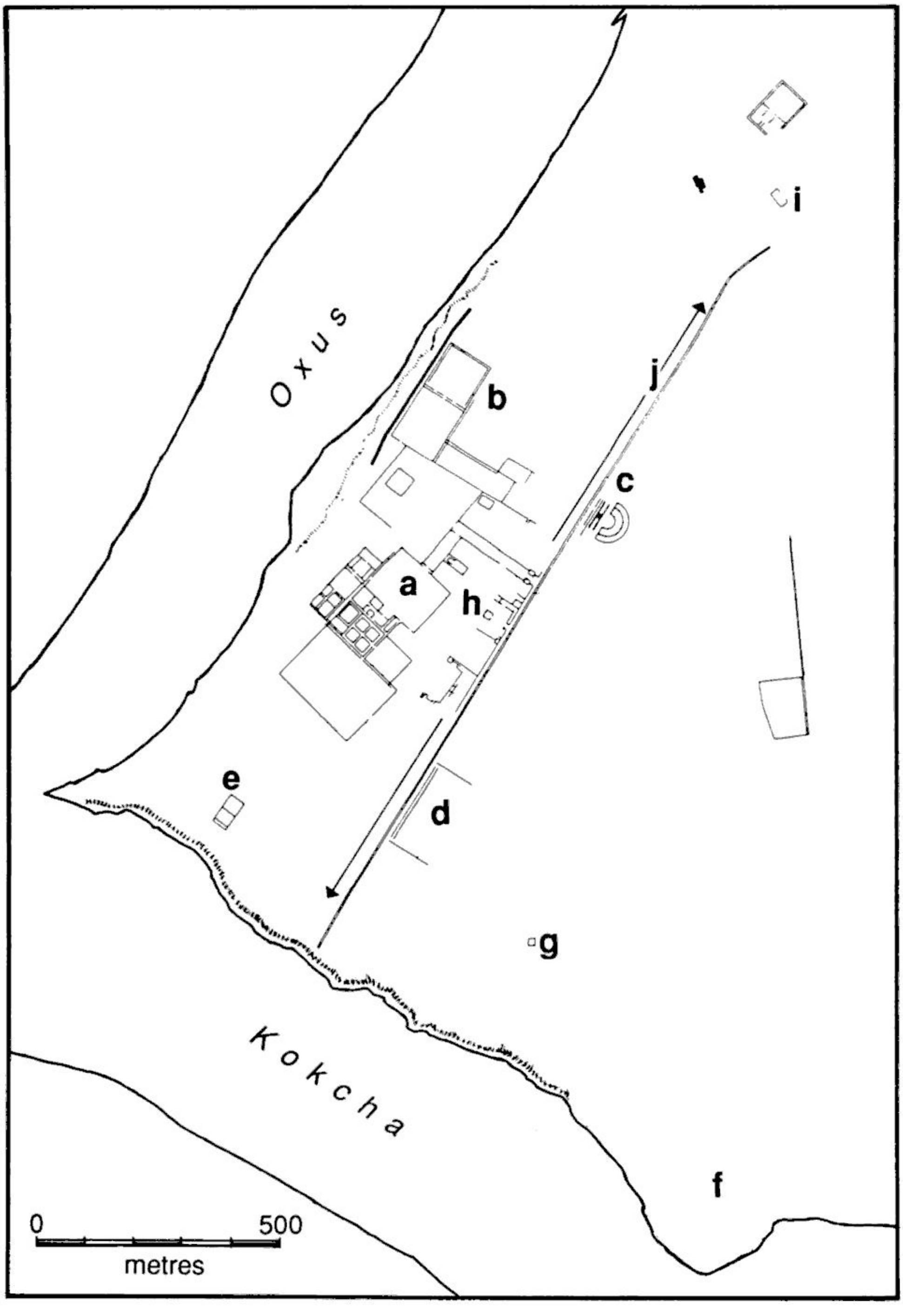


Fig. 11. Ai Khanoum; (a) palace (for details see Fig. 8 above; (b) gymnasium; (c) theatre; (d) arsenal; (e) one of the houses of 'grandees'; (f) citadel; (g) open-air temple platform; (h) temple; (i) temple outside north gate; (j) main street (after Bernard 1982b).

demonstrated by the archaeological discoveries. The mingled cultural traditions of this comparatively small hellenistic settlement are well reflected in the material finds. It is worth noting also that royal policy in this text observed no distinction juridically as regards the rights of inhabitants. It is true, however, that, as so often, the reality appears (ll. 26f.) not to have coincided with the aspirations of the government; but the Seleucid authorities do attempt to correct abuses. At the same time, the king's policy is, in this instance, to enhance the Greek veneer of religious and social life by the establishment of a characteristically Greek institution, the *agon*, and perhaps also by the provision of 'Greek' temples. What is documented is both the central role of the king in the formation and the execution of Seleucid settlement policies, and the specifically Greek modes which he here encouraged their realisation to take. Since this document is, so far, unique, it is obviously difficult to know whether it is possible to generalise from the policies attested by it; on the other hand, there is no reason why these should not represent typical Seleucid approaches to colonisation in specific areas such as frontier zones.

Ai Khanoum is the 'Greek' city excavated by French archaeologists from the 1960s in Bactria on the River Oxus (cf. above pp. 111-12; 143-4). This excavation has indeed shown 'the presence of hellenism' right in the middle of Central Asia. The Greek site is dated from the late fourth century to the mid-second century, when it was destroyed by invasions from the Saka tribes. The buildings discovered (see Fig. 11) include administrative quarters, a theatre, a *temenos*, a gymnasium and several large private dwellings of local grandees, plus a citadel where a garrison was installed, and temples, all surrounded by vast, impressive fortifications of mud brick (see above p. 136). The building is of mud brick because of the lack of good building stone in the vicinity and also because of the local tradition of this type of building. In general design there is use of Greek, Bactrian, Achaemenid and Mesopotamian techniques, design and ornamentation (Bernard 1982b; Colledge 1987; Downey 1988). The Greek settlers worshipped Greek gods (Heracles and Hermes, for example, in the gymnasium), but also local gods, as is suggested by two temples, one inside and one outside the city wall, built to Mesopotamian plan and decorated in Mesopotamian style (Allchin/Hammond 1978; Robert 1968; Bernard 1982; 1990b). What is more, and this gives a graphic idea of the sheer effort involved in these foundations, the Delphic maxims, containing conventional Greek wisdom, were brought from Delphi by one Clearchus, probably to be identified as the pupil of Aristotle of that name, walking or riding all the way across the middle east to the river Oxus, where they were inscribed on stone and set up in the city, to be dug up by the French excavators over two thousand years later:

> These wise sayings of men of former times, the words of famous men, are consecrated at Holy Pytho (Delphi); from there Clearchus copied them carefully, to set them up, shining from afar, in the precinct of Cineas. When a child, show yourself well behaved; when a young man, self-controlled; in middle age, just; as an old man, a good counsellor; at the end of your life, free from sorrow. (Robert 1968; Austin 192; Burstein 49)

We do not know what meaning and effect these sayings had for the inhabitants of Ai Khanoum, or indeed for the Greeks of old Greece in this period. However, the continuing link with Greek culture is indicated by, for example, another piece of evidence, marvellously preserved; the philosophical reading interests and education of third-century inhabitants of Ai Khanoum is almost literally mirrored in the impression left on an earth floor by a Greek philosophical text, written on papyrus (Bernard 1978, 456ff., fig. 20).

At Susa, a Greek/Macedonian colony was installed at some uncertain point before 205, when the list of Greek cities appended to the decree of Antioch-Persis (cf. above pp. 163-4) included the Seleucians-on-the-Eulaeus, identified, from inscriptions excavated at Susa, as a colony there (Haussoullier 1903, 157). We know about this colony mainly from the Greek inscriptions discovered at the site, which range from the third century into the Parthian period. There is a fragmentary decree of 177/6 apparently honouring the chief priestess of the (local) cult of the wife of Seleucus IV (then king) and of Laodice, wife of Antiochus III and mother of Seleucus IV (*SEG* VII 2). Honorific dedications of the late third or early second century also attest the Seleucid presence (cf. above p. 135), and, importantly, the king's maintenance of Susa as the locus of a royal court, a 'capital', with a garrison (*SEG* VII 4). There is also a dedication of the late third or early second century (lettering), honouring an official in charge of revenues (*prosodoi*: *SEG* VII 5). What is interesting is that the Greek inscriptions attest the continuance of a Greek presence at Susa into the later hellenistic period (Le Rider 1965), and that the tradition, so very Greek, of inscribing documents on stone, continued into the middle Parthian period (cf. *SEG* VII 6, honouring a Parthian official, Lysimachus, son of Apollophanes; cf. too *RC* 75, letter of Artabanus III to the magistrates and city of Seleucia-Eulaeus). Also other Greek institutions, such as the gymnasium (*SEG* VII 3), continued; one Nikolaos was honoured for services, which included that of gymnasiarch (*SEG* VII 3, *c.* 100-50), and perhaps also for the construction of a stadium. Furthermore, the Greek practice of the manumission of slaves for service with a cult, articulated in Greek form, to Apollo and Artemis Daittai (no doubt local deities) and to Nanaia, went on, as a series of manumissions of second-century date attest (*SEG* VII 15,17-26; see above p. 148 for the archaeological evidence).

These urban centres, Ai Khanoum, Antioch-Persis and Seleucia-Tigris, were founded as (hellenic) cities, however different from their counterparts in old Greece, and were organised and populated under royal supervision. It is very unlikely that a single policy was applied to all the non-Greek towns of the Seleucid empire. In fact we do not know much about what did happen. However, there are places where apparently no great cultural changes took place (e.g. Uruk: see above pp. 149-55). In others a colony, with its independent institutions as a (tiny) *polis*, was juxtaposed – notably Babylon and Susa, both places of great importance strategically, administratively and politically, though even here change was rudimentary.

Sardis and its transformation

An area of deliberate hellenisation may yet seem to exist: besides the new royal foundations of Greek cities (Antiochs, Seleucias, Stratoniceas, Apameas, Laodiceas), along the routes of Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia, we also find some old non-Greek places hellenised and appearing with a specifically Greek cast. In Asia Minor, perhaps the best example is what happens to Sardis in the third century. Sardis is probably the best (and most neglected) example of the hellenisation of a non-Greek city under Seleucid rule, even if there is uncertainty as to precisely when it acquired the status of a *polis* that it had by *c.* 225. The archaeological record from the excavations has shown the impact of Greek material culture, going back long before Alexander to the archaic period; however, Lydian was still used for public documents in the fourth century, while the two Greek inscriptions concerning Sardis or Sardians (*Syll.*[3] 273; Knibbe 1961-3) come respectively from Miletus and Ephesus, and the regulation concerning the cult of the 'Zeus of Baradates', which is a Greek translation of a Persian edict and exists in a copy of Roman date, could have originally been issued in Greek, by the Achaemenid chancellery (cf. p. 75); Lydian laws were in use (Arrian *Anab.* I 17,3f.), and Lydian personal names were prevalent (Gauthier 1989, 161ff.). A public decree of Miletus for (citizens) of Sardis, dating to around the last third of the fourth century, reveals an absence of Greek civic institutions:

> It seemed good to the People; motion of *synedroi* (councillors), Botes spoke; to accept the friendship which Sardianoi propose to Milesians; that it be decreed by the People that there be the right of arrival to Miletus for any (of the) Sardianoi, who wishes, with immunity from pillage and under treaty both sailing in and sailing out, both for themselves and for whatever they import and export. In Miletus the *prytaneis* (committee) in office are to take care of the Sardianoi, in order that what has been decreed be valid for them and they will not be

> wronged while staying or on departure. In Sardis, whoever the Sardianoi appoint are to take care of Milesians. (*Syll.*[3] 273)

The implication usually drawn is that there are no regular magistrates analogous to the Greek ones; there is no reference in this inscription to the *boule* and *demos* attested at Sardis, in 213. However, there clearly was some form of assembly of Sardians, since they had to choose representatives.

Analogously, the excavations have shown that Sardis was not then built on the scheme of Greek town planning; none of the typical public buildings of a Greek *polis* (theatre, *agora* (market place), stadium, for example) predate the third-century city (on Sardis in the Persian period see Mierse 1983). Neither physically, nor in institutions, about which we know very little before the third century, had Sardis acquired the characteristics of a Greek *polis*. This change came about in the course of the third century. We know from an inscription from Delphi (*Syll.*[3] 578), now dated to *c.* 225 (Nachtergael 1977; Gauthier 1989, 143ff.), that the *polis* of Sardians renewed its 'traditional' links with Delphi, though by itself this text would not prove that Sardis was a *polis* with Greek institutions. Polybius' description of Antiochus III's siege of Sardis (216-215) does, however, reveal the existence of such characteristic Greek features as a theatre and a hippodrome (Polyb. VII 15-17). Now, however, an important series of Seleucid documents, recently published (Robert *ap.* Hanfman 1983; Gauthier 1989), excitingly give the *terminus ante quem* of 213 of this transformation of Sardis:

> (1) (Letter of Antiochus III, March/April 213) ... (that) you should get straight within three years and at once fell timber for the reconstruction (*synoikismos*) of the city and bring it from the (royal) forests of Taranza in accordance with the decision of Zeuxis. We exempt you from the tax of one twentieth (?) which had been added to that of the city and we have given orders to restore to you the gymnasium of which you previously had the use. We have written about these matters to Zeuxis and Ctesicles; in these matters Metrodorus and his colleagues will give you an account. Farewell. (Year) 99, 5 Xandicus. (Gauthier 1989, 13-15)

> (2.1) Heracleides has proposed: since it is agreed to inscribe on the *parastas* (portico) of the temple, in the Metroon, the letter written by the queen to the Council and to the People about the honours voted by the People to the King, the Queen and to their children, agreed by the Council and People, that the treasurer has the inscription engraved; that he draws the expenses from the revenues he administers. (Month) Oloius (July/August).

> (2.2) (Letter of Laodice III to Sardis) Queen Laodice to the Council and People of Sardis, greetings. Metrodorus, Metrophanes, Socrates and Heracleides, your ambassadors, have given me the decree in which you

voted to consecrate a domain sacred 'to Laodice' (*Laodikeion*) and to found there an altar, to celebrate a festival (*panegyris*) called the Laodikeia each year on 15 of the month Hyperebataeus, to hold a procession and a sacrifice to Zeus, protector of the family, for the safety of our brother King Antiochus, ourself and of our children. The ambassadors have begged us (to accept these honours) in accordance with what is stated in the decree. We have accepted with pleasure these honours and approve the zeal of the People. We intend to help the People as much as possible. Your ambassadors will bring you a report. (Year 99), (month) Panemus (June/July). (Gauthier 1989, 47-9)

(There followed a letter of Antiochus III to the Council and People of Sardis of which only the beginning has been preserved).

(3) (Letter of Antiochus III, date not preserved) ... having granted you all that relates to the restoration (of your city) and now wanting you to be in a better situation, we have done what was possible. For the *neoi* (young men) we have reserved for the supply of oil, instead of what you received before, 200 measures of oil each year and, up to this amount, we have given orders to set aside revenues from which you will receive it regularly from an organised reserve. As to the soldiers billeted with you, we agree that, in the houses which you have, they should not use more than the half, but a third. We free you from the rent you pay for the workshops, if at least it has not been imposed on the other cities. We decree that, in the festivals of the Laodikeia celebrated by the city, you will enjoy *ateleia* (immunity from taxes) for three days. On all this we have written to Zeuxis. (Gauthier 1989, 81-3)

Sardis is a polis with a *boule* and assembly, has a treasurer (*tamias*) and uses Greek for the publication of its decrees and public documents! The series also attests the existence of that prime Greek institution, the gymnasium. How early and in what circumstances did this radical change come about? The excavations have established that the new huge temple of Artemis, built in Greek style, but with the dedication of two columns for the temple in Lydian (Hanfman/Ramage 1978, 27, fig. 404, no. 234), dates to the earlier third century, i.e. in the period of Seleucid rule. The theatre is similarly thought to date to the early third century. There is little doubt that this building and that of the other civic structures, such as the stadium, which unfortunately is not datable by the excavations, and gymnasium, were funded by the Seleucids (cf. also Gauthier 1989), and would certainly, in a royal capital, have required royal permission. Indeed the royal rents attainable from the leasing of the workshops were imposed by the Seleucid king precisely because he was the builder and *owner* of the porticos in which they were located (cf. Gauthier 1989, 101ff.), as occurred in other places.

It is indeed possible that Sardis was transformed into a *polis* (cf. above document 3) in the brief period of independence from Seleucid

rule in *c.* 226-224, which is thought to be indicated, somewhat circularly, by the inscription *Syll.*[3] 578, and by the minting of independent silver coins with the legend *Sardianon* (coins of the Sardianoi), attributed by Seyrig (1963) to this period, when Sardis became attached to Attalus of Pergamum (Gauthier 1989, 151ff.). All that this evidence actually attests is that Sardis seems to have seized independent status in this period, not that this is when Sardis *first* became a *polis* of Greek structure. It is equally possible that it was the Seleucids, for whom Sardis was a vitally important royal capital (see above p. 135), and who underwrote the new buildings of Greek character, who engineered this transformation. There is no problem in the fact that a city serving as a Seleucid capital, like Sardis, could be a *polis*, albeit 'subject', as is indicated by the foundation of Seleucia-Tigris, initially as the capital of Seleucus' growing empire, and of Antioch in Syria. What would also be likely is that a group of influential Sardians may have played their part in encouraging the king, whether Antiochus I or a subsequent monarch, somewhat as the so-called hellenising party at Jerusalem later approached Antiochus IV: although a possible difference, in the case of Jerusalem, is an *apparent* absence of evidence of the gradual impact of Greek culture for centuries that we know at Sardis (for a thorough survey of Greek elements in Palestinian culture in the sixth to fourth centuries, cf. Stern 1982):

> At that time (accession of Antiochus IV) there appeared in Israel a group of renegade Jews, who incited the people. 'Let us enter into a covenant with the gentiles round about,' they said, 'because disaster upon disaster has overtaken us since we segregated ourselves from them.' The people thought this a good argument, and some of them in their enthusiasm went to the king and received authority to introduce non-Jewish laws and customs. They built a sports-stadium in the gentile style in Jerusalem. They removed their marks of circumcision and repudiated the holy covenant. They intermarried with gentiles, and abandoned themselves to evil ways. (I *Maccabees* 1.11-15).
>
> But when Seleucus was dead and had been succeeded by Antiochus, known as Epiphanes, Jason, Onias' brother, obtained the high-priesthood by corrupt means. He petitioned the king and promised him three hundred and sixty talents in silver coin immediately, and eighty talents from future revenue. In addition he undertook to pay another hundred and fifty talents for the authority to institute a sports-stadium, to arrange for the education of young men there, and to enrol in Jerusalem a group to be known as the 'Antiochenes' (or 'enrol the inhabitants of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch'). The king agreed, and, as soon as he had seized the high-priesthood, Jason made the Jews conform to the Greek way of life. He abolished the lawful way of life and introduced practices which were against the law. He lost no time in establishing a sports-stadium at the foot of the citadel itself, and he

> made the most outstanding young men assume the Greek athlete's hat. So hellenism reached a high point with the introduction of foreign customs through the boundless wickedness of the impious Jason, no true priest. (II *Maccabees* 4.7-14)

'Hellenisation': real or apparent?

How easy it is for approaches and accounts to become obsolete 'overnight' as a result of new discoveries, is well illustrated by Welles' account (1962) of hellenistic Tarsus (renamed as Antioch-Cydnus in the third century) in Cilicia, under Seleucid rule, as a mere administrative unit without the civic structure of the Greek *polis*. A Greek inscription published subsequently, containing decrees of the early second century of Antioch-Pyramus and of Antioch-Cydnus (*SEG* XIV 980), and attesting the normal Greek institutions of *boule*, assembly and prytaneis, refutes Welles and shows the autonomous organisation by Cilician cities of their local affairs, with the civic institutions and practices of other Greek city states. The cities are 'hellenised' in so far as they use Greek political institutions with the civic and social behaviour these entail, in a way that, for example, the Phoenician cities in this period did not (Millar 1983).

By contrast to what went on in some places under Seleucid rule (cf. also on Failaka above), it is hard, further east, to see Parthia's use of hellenism as much more than superficial, a taste for some Greek art, for Greek mythic themes, such as the wonderful rhytons from Nisa, some liking for Greek literature, sculpture and Greek artifacts; neither in language nor culture was there any deep or lasting change. The Parthians picked what they wanted and played politics with Greek cities in their realms. Cavafy's magnificent poem 'Philhellene' encapsulates beautifully these themes of history:

> See that the engraving is artistic.
> The expression serious and stately.
> The crown had better be rather narrow;
> I do not like those broad Parthian ones.
> The inscription, as usual, in Greek;
> not exaggerated, not pompous –
> lest the proconsul who is always poking about
> and reporting to Rome misconstrue it –
> but none the less of course dignified.
> Something very special on the other side;
> some good-looking discus-thrower in his prime.
> Above all I charge you to see to it
> (Sithaspes, in God's name, let this not be forgotten)
> that after the words King and Saviour,
> there be engraved in elegant letters, Philhellene.
> Now don't try your clever sallies on me,
> Your 'Where are the Greeks?' and 'Where is anything Greek

behind Zagros here, beyond Phraata?'
Since so many others more barbarous than we
write it, we too shall write it.
And finally do not forget that at times
sophists from Syria visit us,
and versifiers, and other wiseacres.
So we are not un-Greek, I reckon. (trans. Dalven 1961)

Yet further east, the Greek/Bactrian kingdom (which is outside the scope of this book) carried on along Seleucid lines, fostering local religion and cults and using locals in administration (Rapin 1982: note also the short Aramaic *ostrakon*, ibid. 347, and the 'Bactrian' graffiti, ibid. 349). The Bactrians also continued to import Greek artifacts, besides using items locally produced, as well as imports from other places, such as India (Colledge 1987). The idea of a 'Parthian wall' blocking access to Iran, Babylonia and Syria, is a mistake (cf. above p. 73). North, across the Oxus, at the fortress site of Takht-i Sangin, in the valley of the Amu-Darya river (the Oxus), in Soviet Tadzhikistan, one of the most surprising finds from the second century is a dedicatory altar, crowned by a statue of Eros; this small Greek-style altar (Plate 16), with its Greek inscription, was dedicated to the god of the river Oxus (= Iranian Wakhsh) by a man who may have been an Iranian fire priest (Atrosokes = 'He who shines with a sacred fire' or 'is useful to the god of fire'):

An *euche* (prayer/offering) that was dedicated by Atrosokes to Oxos. (B.A. Likvinkij and I.P. Pitchikjan *RA* 1981, 202-5; Burstein 52)

This is an interesting example of the imitation of Greek practice, though we may well doubt how far this affected the overall culture; finds from the same site, datable to the third or second century, which include sculptures of satraps (Plates 17, 18, 19) indeed seem to attest and illustrate the continuance of Iranian dress and local artistic traditions.

At Marisa in Palestine, under Seleucid rule from the early second century as a result of the conquests of Antiochus III, were found a famous series of tombs (now destroyed) of the Sidonians in Marisa, a colony of partially hellenised Phoenicians (Peters/Thiersch 1905). Their chamber tombs are in Greek style, with niches for the urns of the dead, as in Macedonian tombs, and decorated with wall paintings (Plates 20, 21, 22). These included Greek as well as local influences. Although the names of the dead in these tombs were written in Greek, we should not exaggerate the Greekness of this enclave, since besides the fifty-one (published) short Greek funerary texts, which included dating by the Seleucid regnal era, a host of Aramaic inscriptions, including curses, mostly still unpublished, were also discovered at the

site (Peters/Thiersch 1905). As in many empires, the culture of the rulers inevitably had its attractions for elements among the ruled, but often in a quite superficial and temporary way.

There have been two main schools of thought in approaching the question of hellenisation in this period. First, historically, is the old colonial British empire view (and that of German scholars), encapsulated in the work of William Tarn, who attributed to the hellenistic kings an almost missionary role as disseminators of hellenism, and who even described their aim as being 'to have contiguous city-states through Asia' (Tarn 1938, 5). In this view, hellenism is a political mechanism for unifying the discrete, as well as being a blessing (cf. Bengtson 1988, referred to above pp. 141-2). The subsequent, but fundamental experience of decolonisation has influenced two schools of thought represented by, for example, Préaux (1978) and Briant (*RTP*), who stress the colonial and exploitative character of Macedonian rule and the subject/ruler relationship, and who therefore tend to see social and cultural relations in terms of separation and segregation. This view, for which we have some sympathy, goes too far both for the élites and for other classes, and does not take into account, in the case of the Seleucids, the Achaemenid heritage and the limits that this imposed upon the Seleucid kings, quite apart from the demands made by Babylonian traditions (for example with regard to the role of the king, status of cities, and cults; cf., for a less stark view, Briant 1987a). Will, another important hellenistic historian, implicitly following the latter school of thought, actually posits an inability to sort out the relations of Greeks and non-Greeks as the major cause for the 'failure' of the Seleucid empire, especially in Iran (Will 1979; cf. also Oelsner 1986). It is hard to agree with this. First, just as under the Achaemenids, local peoples were not 'second-class citizens' – divisions were socio-political rather than ethnic-cultural (see above pp. 167-70); secondly, it is impossible to accept that it was internal conflict between Greeks and non-Greeks, for which there is no evidence, that in the end weakened the Seleucid empire from inside in the second century (see further pp. 225ff.). Certainly the Seleucids were 'foreign' conquerors initially, with their place of origin beyond the area they came to dominate, but the limited available evidence shows that Seleucus I and Antiochus I were successful in constructing Babylonia (as well as north Syria later) as an effective 'home-base' for themselves (see above pp. 14-37); in this effort the support of select members of local élites played a crucial role.

However, the idea of 'hellenisation' as in part a directed process 'from above' is not totally implausible. Distinct from this is the fact that we know that in the third century (and earlier), for example in Asia Minor, 'hellenism', or some aspects of it, spread from several Greek centres: in the case of Caria, for example, from Rhodes, and in

the second century, perhaps from Aphrodisias; so, too, a similar process could go on in other areas. Also individual kings, for political and cultural reasons, emulating some aspects of the Seleucids, promoted Greek institutions and some Greek culture (for example Cappadocia, D.S. XXXI 7-8; Anisa, Michel 546) though the country at large remained unaffected. There is evidence, too, of the promotion of 'Greek things' by some Macedonian kings in certain places (for example, the *agon* at Failaka, Sardis and Babylon), or at certain levels of society (for example Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos, in the reign of Antiochus II: see above), although in the case of élites the process may have been self-generated too. Whether the kings saw themselves as pushing Greekness is completely unattested and highly dubious. One might think that, for example, the system of 'Friends' at court, the giving of gifts symbolic of the court and so of closeness to the king to non-Greeks (as in I *Maccabees* (e.g. 2.18: see above p. 132) was to stimulate political solidarity in a way only incidentally Greek, and is a mechanism common to many courts through history (see above pp. 132-3).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Antiochus III: imperialist and warrior

With the advantage of hindsight, Polybius was able to recognise that the accession, at approximately the same time, of three young kings, Philip V in Macedon, Ptolemy IV in Egypt, and Antiochus III in the Seleucid empire, produced a new phase of wars in the history of these kingdoms, though one may doubt his Romanocentric view that this was what, in effect, brought in the new phenomenon of Roman 'intervention' in the Greek east. As is well known, Philip V of Macedon ended his reign disastrously, removed from mainland Greece and under the thumb of Rome. By contrast, Antiochus III still ruled, at his death, a formidable empire to which he had attempted to give greater solidity; indeed the Ptolemies lost permanently to the Seleucids the valuable areas of southern Syria and Phoenicia, besides losing Judaea too, as a result of the military conquests of Antiochus III (202-198).

When Antiochus succeeded to the throne as a young man (younger, indeed, than Octavian Augustus) in 223, following the assassination in the army of his elder brother, Seleucus III, while in Asia Minor, he faced all the difficulties of securing his authority in the army and court, besides the problem of challenges to his throne by Macedonian satraps (on Antiochus' age, see Schmitt 1964, 1-31). Achaeus, sent to recover from Attalus I of Pergamum (241-197) Seleucid territories in Asia Minor, attempted to use his army against the king for a coup. The incident illustrates the effective power of the institution of kingship and of loyalism to the dynasty:

> On reaching Laodicea in Phrygia he (Achaeus) assumed the diadem and for the first time ventured to take the title of king and use it in his letters to towns, taking this step chiefly at the instigation of the exile Garsyeris. He continued to advance and was nearly in Lycaonia when his troops mutinied, the cause of their dissatisfaction being that, as it now appeared, the expedition was against their natural and hereditary king. Achaeus, therefore, when he was aware of their disaffection, abandoned his present enterprise and, wishing to persuade the soldiers that from the outset he had no intention of invading Syria, turned back and began to plunder Pisidia, and having thus provided his soldiers with plenty of

> booty and gained the goodwill and confidence of them all, returned to his own province. (Polyb. V 57,5-8)

Achaeus had managed to recover the Seleucid possessions in Anatolia – Lydia, Phrygia and Mysia – which had been lost to Attalus, when he, in turn, was besieged and captured at Sardis in 213 by the king, Antiochus, whose personal handling of the affair indicates its serious character. Achaeus was punished as the rebel and usurper he was, his nose, ears and hands cut off, his body impaled on a stake and exhibited publicly, the punishment meted out to traitors in the Achaemenid and earlier near eastern kingdoms (Polyb. VIII 21,1-3). Antiochus did not abolish the position of viceroy in Anatolia to which Achaeus had been appointed, but chose a new, and as it turned out, trustworthy candidate, Zeuxis, whose importance and activity in Asia Minor from 213 to the 190s (the end of Antiochus' rule north of Taurus) is becoming increasingly well documented in inscriptions quoted abundantly in this book (cf. pp. 43-4; 181; 208).

A rebellion in Media had looked potentially serious at the start of Antiochus' reign when the satrap Molon, possibly viceroy of the Upper Satrapies, raised a revolt in 222, drawing upon his troops as satrap, which included Iranian forces (cf. Polyb. V 52,5); he had the support (but not active military help) of his brother Alexander, satrap of the province of Persis, and invaded Babylonia. Among other places, Seleucia-Tigris was taken. Initial royal expeditionary forces sent to quell the trouble were inadequate since Antiochus III had begun the campaign which was eventually to culminate in the conquest of south Syria – and only with a major army and the personal presence of Antiochus III in command, were Molon's forces defeated or persuaded to defect (Polyb. V 51-4) in 220. Molon in fact took the title of king (*basileus*), as a series of coins with this legend attest (*ESM* 85ff.; 204ff.). However, with the exception of Seleucia-Tigris, which failed to hold out (and was severely punished afterwards), Susa and other places kept loyal and, furthermore, no satrap further east joined in. But the rebellion of Molon and his invasion of Babylonia were potentially dangerous precisely because it was Babylonia that he attacked, where he even got hold of the royal capital of Seleucia-Tigris.

These rebellions, which date from the beginning of Antiochus III's reign, seem to be linked to the crisis over the succession and need to be distinguished carefully from indigenous revolts against Seleucid rule. With this one might compare the recurring problems about the succession encountered by the Achaemenid kings, for example the struggle for the throne at Artaxerxes I's death (Stolper 1985, 114-16), and also, earlier, the difficulties surrounding the Assyrian king Esarhaddon's accession (Parpola 1980).

Wisely, Antiochus III shelved for the moment his invasions of

Palestine and south Syria (221, 219, 217), and, following a defeat by Ptolemy IV at the battle of Raphia (217), turned next (212 – *c.* 204), after dealing with Achaeus, to strengthen and extend Seleucid control over the eastern empire – as consolidator of the Seleucid kingdom, not its rebuilder as, for example, Cary (1951) termed his reign with the seductive label *restitutor orbis*. The inscriptions and narrative sources often portray the king justifying or explaining his actions as following the traditional policy of his forebears (*progonoi*), and this is not mere flannel. In the case of the Seleucids, consistent and continuing policies can dimly be discerned from Antiochus I on: the attempt to conquer Palestine (like several other near eastern empires) and the hold on Bactria, Inner and Outer Iran, Thrace and Seleucid Asia Minor and the Arab-Persian gulf – all dictated by strategic, economic and imperial considerations.

Armenia in the third century

Antiochus' eastern campaigns are often understated and underplayed, written off as insignificant and ephemeral. In fact, Antiochus was not only consolidating and clarifying relations with dynasts, but possibly also adding new territories to the Seleucid empire. Beginning in 212, Commagene, north of Syria, and north Armenia were brought under direct Seleucid control with the imposition of satraps and the king of south Armenia was made to pay arrears of tribute and contribute to Antiochus III's campaign:

> When Xerxes was king of the city (*polis*) of Arsamosata, which lies near the 'Fair Plain', between the Euphrates and Tigris, Antiochus the king, encamping in front of this city, undertook its siege. When Xerxes saw the forces of the king, at first he made himself scarce, but after a time, fearing that if his palace was taken by the enemy, the rest of his realm would be destabilised too, changed his mind and sent a message to Antiochus, proposing talks. The Friends that Antiochus trusted advised him not to let the young man go once he had got hold of him, but, having taken possession of the city, to bestow the realm (*dynasteia*) on Mithridates, who was the natural son of Antiochus' sister (cf. Schmitt 1964, 28; later, probably adopted by Antiochus). The king paid no attention to these men, but sent for the young man and ended the enmity, remitting the greater part of the money which his father still owed for tribute (*phoroi*). Having received an immediate payment of three hundred talents from him, and a thousand horses, and a thousand mules with harness, he restored all his (Xerxes') dominions, and by giving his sister Antiochis in marriage (i.e. instead of giving the realm to Antiochis' son) conciliated and attached to himself all the inhabitants of those districts, and won a reputation for having handled affairs in a kingly and magnanimous manner. (Polyb. VIII 23)

Antiochus subsequently had Xerxes poisoned through his sister, for

reasons that can only be guessed (John of Antioch F53 (*FHG* IV p. 557): on the date of this, in the last years of the third century (202/1?), see Schmitt 1964, 28 n. 7). An instructive analogy is provided by Sargon of Assyria's (721-705) attempt to secure the loyalty of the ruler of Bit-Burutash (in Cappadocia), lying along the extreme north-western frontier of the Assyrian empire: first, he installed a pro-Assyrian ruler; secondly, when the initial nominee's son succeeded, Sargon gave him his daughter in marriage together with the territory of a defeated, neighbouring state as dowry; when the king of Bit-Burutash nevertheless rebelled some years later, he was removed from the throne and deported with his retinue while, it has been plausibly argued, Sargon's daughter, together with a staff, continued to administer the region in her father's, hence Assyrian imperial, interest (cf. Hawkins 1982, 419; Postgate 1973, 31).

Although there are many uncertainties about Armenia under Alexander and the Seleucids, Strabo's description of the area (XI 14,1-16) does indicate that Alexander ruled it after the Achaemenids, and the Seleucids after Alexander (XI 15,1); and Appian (*Syr*. 55) lists Armenia among the possessions of Seleucus I. Alexander did not in person conduct any campaigns in Armenia, which lay remote from his main objectives. We know that after Darius' defeat at Gaugamela, Alexander appointed a Persian, Mithrines, as satrap (Arrian, *Anab*. III 16,5). How peaceful the transfer of power was is uncertain since no account of the takeover has survived. The next datable testimony belongs to 321 by which time Mithrines had been replaced, or succeeded, by a Macedonian (D.S. XVII 64,6). That Alexander sent an expedition of some sort to Armenia (north or south is uncertain) is inferable from Strabo; when describing the resources of Armenia Strabo cites gold-mines at a place called Hyspiritis (location unknown), to which Alexander sent a force of soldiers on reconnaissance (Strabo XI 14,9). The Macedonian 'conquest' of Armenia did arouse contemporary interest in so far as the Thessalian Medius of Larisa, an officer of Alexander, wrote an *archaeologia* of Armenia, postulating, *inter alia*, the Thessalian origin of the Armenians and the Thessalian derivation of certain aspects of their culture (e.g. dress, horsemanship, even population: Strabo XI 14,12). Pearson's suggestion (1960, 68-9)) that the point of Medius' stories was political – to represent Armenia as a hellenised area (a difficult task for his time) which Alexander liberated from alien Persian rule – is hard to prove since so little of the work remains. The tenor of Medius' writing, so revealingly that of a Thessalian, may also be explained as part and parcel of a lasting Greek taste for a cultural imperialism that consisted of deriving other civilisations from the Greek and an understandable (and familiar) approach to the assimilation of unfamiliar cultures by seeing similarities (real or imaginary). However, nothing further is learnt

about the purpose or results of the Macedonian expedition.

We know very little about Armenia under Seleucid rule before the reign of Antiochus III (see above pp. 15-17). There are precisely three references to Armenia in the third century before this at points, characteristically for the sources, when it was aiding enemies of, or rebels against, the Seleucid kings. Diodorus (XXXI 19,5), drawing on an unnamed source which could be Polybius, described how the Seleucids lost Cappadocia in *c.* 260, when an Armenian king with a Persian name, Ardoates (perhaps to be corrected to Aroantes, and so identifiable with Aroandes-Orontes: Marquart 1928, 231), gave support to Ariarathes, who killed the Seleucid governor of Cappadocia, expelled the Seleucid forces and founded a dynasty. Memnon (*FGrH* 434 F14) refers to Ziaelas, son of Nicomedes I of Bithynia, taking refuge with 'the king of the Armenians', who is unnamed, in about the mid-third century. Finally, Polyaenus (IV 17) has a notice about the Armenian king Arsames, identifiable as the father of Xerxes, who showed some freedom of action in *c.* 229/8 by giving refuge to Antiochus Hierax after the latter had failed to oust the reigning and legitimate king, Seleucus II. It is notable that on the coins of Arsames (Head 1911, 754), which bear his name and title in Greek, he wears the satrapal tiara familiar from the coins of Achaemenid satraps, with a diadem tied around. He does not, in contrast to contemporary kings of Cappadocia, follow Greek fashion and appear bare-headed save for the diadem on coins. The Armenian kings never do this. The inference from this extremely sparse evidence is that Armenia was ruled by local dynasts, who seem to have been perceived by the Seleucids as under their suzerainty.

Strabo gives potentially useful information about a new direction given to Seleucid policy by Antiochus III in Armenia. In his account of historical Armenia, he notes briefly the rule of the Achaemenids, followed by that of Alexander and of the Seleucids. In the context of the Seleucids, he mentions a certain Orontes as 'the last' to rule (XI 14,15). He next relates Antiochus' reorganisation of Armenia, after Orontes' rule, by which the country was divided between two men with Persian names, Artaxias (Artaxerxes) and Zariadris, probably father and son (see below), who, Strabo states, ruled as 'generals' (*strategoi*, i.e. satraps) until, after Antiochus' defeat by Rome in 190, they asserted their independence, assuming the title *basileus* (XI 14,5; 14,15). There is no difficulty about Orontes' position since he could have been, as in the context seems right, one of the local kings of the Seleucid system; Strabo does not use the verb *basilein* (to rule as king) of him, but *hyparchein* (to govern/to rule as a subordinate). Orontes' absence from Polybius is not significant because we now have merely scattered fragments of Book VIII, where Antiochus' Armenian campaign was described.

Strabo, in his very concise account, does not explain the circumstances of Orontes' replacement. Had he died, or was he removed? But it is notable that Strabo specifically remarked that Orontes claimed descent from Hydarnes (Vidarna), i.e. one of the seven Persian nobles who set Darius the Great on the throne (DB §68 (IV, 84-5); Hdt. III 70) and as a result secured for themselves hereditary privileges within the Achaemenid kingdom. Strabo's comment should not, probably, be taken as casual genealogical information of merely antiquarian interest, but rather be set in a political context. It was the practice in the hellenistic period for Iranian kings of territories that were formerly Achaemenid satrapies to trace their descent from old leading Persian families linked by ties of marriage to the Achaemenid dynasty, or to the Seven who had helped establish Darius' usurpation. This is true of the kings of Pontus (Meyer 1879/1968, 31-8) and Cappadocia, and later those of Commagene (Dörner 1975, 26-31). The Cappadocian dynasty, for example, whose partially fictitious genealogy is preserved in Diodorus (XXXI 19,1-2), traced its line back both to the Seven and even to Cyrus the Great. Iranian dynasts in the hellenistic period found that descent from the Achaemenids or one of the six great Persian families, whether fictitious or not, helped to validate their claims to legitimate rule as rightful heirs to the Achaemenids. This, probably, is the significance of Strabo's reference to Orontes' descent from one of Darius' helpers. Indeed the late-third-century Orontes had a formidable array of Achaemenid satraps of Armenia named Orontes to cite. Thus, for example, at the time of Cyrus the Younger's revolt against Artaxerxes II an Orontes was satrap of Armenia; he remained loyal, a service for which he was well rewarded with Artaxerxes' sister, Rhodogyne, as wife (Plutarch *Artaxerxes* 27; Xenophon, *Anab.* II 4,8; III 4,13). In 331 an Orontes is again named as satrap of Armenia (Arrian *Anab.* III 8,5), commanding the large Armenian forces and cavalry at Gaugamela. Then, in 316, an Orontes emerges again as satrap of Armenia, writing in Aramaic to the Macedonian satrap of Persis, Peucestas (D.S. XIX 23,3; on the problems of sorting out the second and third generation of Orontes in the fourth century see Judeich 1892, 221-5; Osborne 1975, 291ff.; Hornblower 1982, 176ff. and nn. 48, 58). The importance of this marriage link of the Orontid family with the Achaemenids in hellenistic dynastic politics is reflected in the appearence of Orontes, husband of Rhodogyne, among the ancestors of Antiochus IV of Commagene (AD 38-72) at Antiochus' monumental tomb at Nemrud-Dagh (Dörner 1975, 26-31).

Manandian (1965: to be used with caution, cf. J. and L. Robert 1952, 184-5) saw the possibility of identifying our late-third-century Iranian Orontes as 'the last to rule' of the same family dynasty and suggested, as is also possible, the continuing rule of the Orontids in the earlier third century (cf. above). We could have here an instance, not

unparalleled, of the survival of the quasi-dynastic rule of the old Achamenid satraps (and perhaps, therefore, of an ancient power structure). If so, this gives a more complex background to Antiochus' choice of a different Persian family, whom he apparently kept as satraps, perhaps out of tact to supporters of Orontes and any family, as well as a determination to exercise a more direct control over them. Artaxias (Greek Artaxerxes), one of Antiochus' two new satraps, is named on three 'boundary' stones, inscribed in Aramaic, which were discovered near Lake Sevan in the far north of Armenia (Frye 1962, 277ff. and nn. 35, 37; Dupont-Sommer 1946-8; Donner/Röllig 1973-9, nos. 274-5), mentioning Artaxias as king and son of Zariatr (Greek Zariadries), dated to the reign of Artaxias I (*c.* 190-164). Antiochus gave Artaxias north Armenia (Great Armenia) and Zariadris southern Armenia, specifically Sophene (Strabo XI 14,5; 14,15), as their respective satrapies, so that Zariadries succeeded to the kingdom of Xerxes and Artaxias to that of Orontes.

It is very probably to the reign of Antiochus III, possibly before the appointment of Artaxias and Zariadris, that a fascinating group of Greek rock inscriptions belongs, which have, with the exception of Manandian, been totally neglected by historians (Plates 23-6). In 1914 three Greek inscriptions were found carved on a rock face of the southern slope of a hill at Armavir (modern Echmiadzin), which lies north-west of Mount Ararat in the fertile plain of the river Araxes, within the Soviet Republic of Armenia. In 1927, four more inscriptions, also in Greek, were found at the same site at a distance of about twelve metres from the first series to be found. They were published in 1942, and again in 1946, in Russian and Armenian by the Russian and Armenian scholars, Boltunova and Manandian. They did not become accessible in the west until in 1952 the Roberts gave the texts and brief but valuable comments in the *Bulletin Epigraphique* (181-7). In 1953, Trever republished the texts in his Russian book on Armenian archaeology (pp. 134-7; 142-7). Since then, save for Manandian's work, used by Burney and Lang (1971, 191-2), they have not been utilised by hellenistic historians, no doubt largely because of their comparative inaccessibility and partly because of the time of their publication – after hellenistic scholars like Rostovtzeff, Bengtson and Bickerman had completed their major works on hellenistic history. The inscriptions can be dated approximately to 200, on the basis of the lettering (cf. J. and L. Robert 1952, 184-5). They are all inscribed in similar, rather irregular cursive lettering (cf. Plates 23-6) of a character paralleled by other examples of cursive style among Seleucid inscriptions of the late third and early second century (for example, the Eriza copy of the edict of Antiochus III (below p. 205) and early-second-century manumissions from Susa).

The inscriptions comprise: (1) a fragmentary text referring to Hesiod

and to his brother Perses (Plate 23); (2) a compilation of extracts of dramatic verses, including a quotation from Euripides' *Hippolytus* (Habicht 1953), either a collection of copy-book sentences learnt by heart in elementary education, or else a gnomic anthology, illustrating a particular moral theme; (3) a list, perhaps an inventory, of uncertain significance (Plate 24). These inscriptions were separated (by a distance of about 12 metres) from nos 4-7; (4) The beginning of a letter from a King of the Armadoeiroi (unknown), named Mithras, to 'Orontes king', expressing in conventional language greetings, wishes for the king's good health and that of his offspring (*eggona*), and probably for his continuing prosperity in ruling his *basileia*, which is mentioned (Plate 25); (5) a list of the months of a calendar (Plate 26); (6) a partially preserved letter addressed to 'the Hellene Noumenios', perhaps from a king who is mentioned but not named in the surviving text; (7) an inscription, partially preserved, in which Noumenios reports to a female, described by the epithet *philadelphos* (brother lover), familiar in hellenistic royal terminology, apparently telling bad news in poetic language (?the death of Orontes). What are the meaning and functions of this strange medley of inscriptions?

There can be little certainty. Nos. 1-3, which are physically one group, may be functionally similar, i.e. school texts, since the practice, apparently followed here, of grouping extracts by literary genre, epic verse (no. 1) and dramatic (no. 2), is paralleled in surviving anthologies; lists of words (no. 3?) also survive as school texts, though usually the educational point of the list is clear. Nos. 4-7 seem to be of a different character. Nos. 4, 6 and 7, appear to be public documents – official correspondence, in Greek, of local rulers and an official, who was Greek. The calendar, no. 5, is not necessarily out of place since the order of the months establishes that it was that of the official *Seleucid* calendar, which any place within the Seleucid sphere would need to be familiar with and use. Letter no. 4 is particularly interesting. Orontes has the title *basileus*; his territory (like that of other Seleucid local rulers) is a *basileia*; he has offspring – a royal succession, for whose health it was traditional to express concern in the royal correspondence of the hellenistic period. A ruler named Mithras is not otherwise known. Noumenios, the name of a later Seleucid satrap in the reign of Antiochus IV (but it is a common Greek name), could be either a Seleucid official, or a high-ranking official of Orontes. That the king Orontes of the Armavir inscription is to be identified as the Seleucid ruler of that name is very hard to disbelieve. If this second group of inscriptions constitutes a little group of authentic official documents, then it would appear from no. 4 that Orontes did have successors had Antiochus III wished to continue his dynasty. In fact, Antiochus chose to replace the existing dynasties in both north and south Armenia.

Apart from these Greek inscriptions, there is an almost total dearth

of Greek material from hellenistic Greater Armenia. The comparative scarcity of excavated sites from the late fourth to the second century in both Turkish and Soviet Armenia, the lack of casual or 'illicit' finds from this period, plus the destruction by the early Armenian Church of pagan remains, means that the archaeological background is a virtual vacuum for the third to second centuries. The sole exception is the site of Garni, a fortified city, which has been systematically excavated in the hills, 18 miles east of Erevan. It was used as a residence by the kings of North Armenia from the second century (Burney/Lang 1971, 250-1; Lang 1980, 144). The long-accepted view, based primarily upon the literary evidence, that public philhellenism and patronage of Greek culture was first manifested in the first century by the king Tigranes the Great (95-55), requires some modification now (cf. J. and L. Robert 1952, 184-5). While it might be conceivable that these inscriptions were to do with a Seleucid colony, of which otherwise there is no attestation, for example the school texts nos. 1 and 2, this guess does not fit well with nos. 4, 6 and 7. That the decision to memorialise in Greek some texts of official letters on the pattern of the Seleucid kings emanated from Orontes, or from high officials at court, seems probable. This suggestion is supported by several un-Greek characteristics of the inscriptions, apart from misspellings; for example, the choice of rock for the display of official documents is not Greek but a widespread practice of eastern kingdoms; the reference to Noumenios as 'the Greek' would not occur in Greek hellenistic royal correspondence, where officials are described simply by personal name and others by name, patronymic and city ethnic. This usage can be taken to indicate that the king of no. 6, possibly also Orontes, was not Greek, and furthermore, not surprisingly, that Greeks in this area were to be remarked upon. We know from their coins that in Sophene the kings Arsames and Xerxes were using Greek legends by the last quarter of the third century. There is no reason to doubt that communication existed between south and north Armenia and between the latter and the Seleucid empire; indeed the fact that the cursive Greek script used to inscribe the Armavir inscriptions mirrors the contemporary cursive used in Seleucid inscriptions of the period indirectly points to this communication. Furthermore, a little later, Artaxias I, Orontes' successor, was to coin in silver, with Greek legends naming him King Artaxias the Great (Seyrig 1955; Bedoukian 1968). He may, in his public use of Greek, have followed the example of Orontes, who seems to have made some use of Greek for the publication of at least some documents, while the school texts may reflect the teaching and learning of Greek, probably for his court or a section of it. How much earlier this goes back is unknown. Needless to say, it is important not to exaggerate, but to remember the continuing use of Aramaic, as Artaxias' inscriptions show; no doubt this remained

the usual language for local government in this area during the hellenistic period.

The campaigns of Antiochus III

After Antiochus III's re-organisation of affairs in Armenia (212-211), the king moved on to Ecbatana in Media, where (210) he mustered a large army (Justin XLI 5,7, mentions 100,000 light troops and 20,000 cavalry: an unlikely story!) and removed from the sanctuary of Anaitis precious metals, gold and silver encasing the wooden columns, and enough from the silver tiles, gold and silver bricks remaining stored in the temple, left intact by his predecessors, to coin 'very nearly four thousand talents', apparently to finance his campaigns (Polyb. X 27,11-13). What sort of arrangements with the local officials were undertaken in this atypical apparent pillage, of a character normally avoided as counterproductive, we do not know. There is no justification in Polybius' account for the description of Antiochus' move as the 'invasion' of Media (*pace* Austin, 251 on no. 150). His famous campaign, which continued from the Iranian plateau to central Asia and the Indian frontier (his so-called *anabasis*), was originally recorded in detail in Polybius' account, only fragments of which now survive. The status and position of the Parthians at this time, Antiochus' next target (209), has therefore caused considerable difficulties; and on the answer to this question depends (in part) one's view of the state of the eastern areas of the Seleucid empire (disintegrating or not). In our view the power of the Parthians at this period has tended to be overrated (cf. above pp. 84-90). After their occupation of Parthyene, the location of which, it is important to note, is in a precipitous territory separated from both Hyrcania and Iran by extensive mountains, the Parthian centres of power at Dara and Nisa were built *remote from Seleucid possessions*, in the northernmost region of the area the Parthians had yet occupied. It is true that Parthians raided, in organised gangs (Polyb. X 49; XI 34,1-10), and made incursions into neighbouring Seleucid areas, such as Hyrcania, even occupying a town (Syrinx) for a period; but they did not 'conquer' the Seleucid satrapies adjacent to Parthyene. They were raiders. This is what they had done (or a party of them) by 209 when Antiochus III chased the Parthians out of north-east Media, back to Parthyene. In this period Parthian dynasts acknowledged Seleucid suzerainty, for example on their coins (cf. pp. 89-90), and in their possible sending of contingents to fight for the Seleucid armies (see p. 90). It is quite obvious from the history of Parthian expansion in the first half of the second century, beginning only in the 170s with settlement on the north and south sides of the Caspian Gates, that this, geographically and historically, marks the start of what turned into a Parthian policy

of conquest and expansion into Iran.

It was probably late in 210 (the year date should be read as SE 101 or 102, not 103, *pace* Malay 1987), on the 23rd day of the penultimate month of the year, that Antiochus wrote from somewhere in inner or outer Iran, the letter to Zeuxis, viceroy of Seleucid Anatolia, which the latter had received by the first month of SE 103 (209) and had forwarded to Philotas, satrap of Mysia, where it was published by a local official, Bithys, by the 20th of the same month (quoted above pp. 43-4). This dossier is a valuable indication of the working of the Seleucid chain of communications, from king, away in the eastern parts of his empire, to the western areas of his kingdom, over great distances; how long the timelag was depends on the date (SE 101 or 102). The dossier, showing Antiochus' personal involvement in the appointment of a new chief-priest (nothing to do with the later chief-priesthoods of the state cult of Antiochus III and of his *progonoi*), whose important sphere of responsibility was over 'all the sanctuaries in the region beyond (i.e. north) of Taurus' and the administrative supervision of their revenues, evidently in response to a request for the position from his loyal Friend, Nicanor, sheds some light on the continuing administrative work, appointments and petitions that the king routinely dealt with, while on major campaigns, to keep the empire ticking over.

From Parthyene, where the Parthian ruler Arsaces (= Artabanus I: Colledge 1977, 163) submitted to Antiochus III, the king moved through the province of Aria, which was loyal, against the Bactrians under Euthydemus (208-206). After a series of battles and sieges (including that of Bactra), the main account of which has been lost, Antiochus seems to have treated Euthydemus as a subject in revolt and as a usurper. The peace terms recognised Antiochus' suzerainty (cf. below), although the detailed provisions have not been recorded by Polybius; furthermore, Antiochus provisioned his army at Euthydemus' expense and took over the latter's valuable elephant forces. Euthydemus recognised the Seleucid king's right to confer or refuse the royal title and, concomitantly, Seleucid suzerainty:

> Euthydemus himself was a Magnesian and he replied to (Teleas, also a Magnesian) the ambassador that it was not right for Antiochus to try to expel him from his kingdom. He himself had not revolted from the king, but had destroyed the descendants of others who had: that was how he had secured rule over Bactria. He added further arguments to that effect and urged Teleas to show goodwill in mediating a settlement by urging Antiochus not to refuse him the title and position of king. Should Antiochus refuse the request, there would be no security for either of them: large hordes of nomads were at hand who presented a threat to both of them, and the country would certainly be barbarised if they allowed them in. With these words he sent Teleas back to Antiochus. The

king had long been anxious to resolve the situation, and on hearing the report of Teleas he readily consented to a settlement for the above-mentioned reasons. After much toing and froing between the two sides by Teleas, Euthydemus finally sent his son Demetrius to ratify the agreement. The king received him and thought the young man worthy of royalty on account of his appearance, his dignified bearing and conversation; he first promised to give him one of his daughters (in marriage) and secondly he conceded the royal title to his father. On the other matters (?fiscal and military obligations; perhaps territorial concessions to Antiochus, cf. Will 1967, 51) he concluded a written treaty and a sworn alliance, and then broke camp after generously supplying his army with provisions and adding to his forces the elephants which Euthydemus had. (Polyb. XI 39, 1-10; Austin 150)

It seems wrong to play down as a charade – certainly not the tenor of Polybius' account – the Bactrian king's acceptance of the dominant position of the Seleucid kingdom. It was, as here, the Seleucid king who conferred the title of *basileus* (to Xerxes of Armenia; Arsaces of Parthia; Euthydemus of Bactria) and the powers that this entailed on rulers of the Seleucid empire, or refused it, as in the case of Artaxias and Zariadries in North Armenia. Antiochus' amusing (to us) vetting of Euthydemus' son to see if, as potential successor, he was of kingly material, indicates the personal qualities of physical attractiveness, dignity and culture a king was required to have (cf. above pp. 129-32).

After Bactria, Antiochus was able to renew Seleucid links with the north-western area of Mauryan India:

> He crossed the Caucasus and descended into India, renewed his friendship with Sophagesenus king of the Indians and received more elephants, raising their number to a total of 150, provisioned his army once more on the spot, and he himself broke camp with his troops while leaving behind Androsthenes of Cyzicus to bring back the treasure which the king (Sophagasenus) had agreed to give him. (Polyb. XI 39,11-12)

Antiochus' return itinerary gives a valuable outline of the eastern boundaries of the Seleucid empire, which are not usually mentioned in our sources because of the western, Aegean focus of those surviving:

> He traversed Arachosia, crossed the river Erymanthus (the Helmand), passed though Drangiana (Seistan) and reached Carmania, where he established his winter quarters as winter was now at hand (206/5). (Polyb. XI 39,13)

The eastern satrapies of western(?) Arachosia, Seistan, Carmania and Persis (cf. Chapters 4 and 5) were closely under Seleucid control. It now looks as though Antiochus III moved from Antioch-Persis to Babylon in 205, where he is recorded as participating in what seems likely to be part of the New Year festival in April 205, as the newly published

astronomical diary quoted on pp. 130-1 attests. It is now, in 205-204, that the scope (and continuity) of Seleucid imperial policy is further revealed by Antiochus III's naval expedition to the Arab-Persian gulf. From about the time of Seleucus I, the Seleucids had followed an active policy here, garrisoning the island of Failaka, off modern Kuwait, and trading with Gerrha (Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985). Now Antiochus III visibly intensified activity. Failaka was still Seleucid (see p. 174) and perhaps the islands of Bahrain too (Salles 1987). Antiochus seems to have intended a campaign of conquest against Gerrha, but in the end arranged a treaty instead, allowing the old status of the Gerrhaeans as independent to continue:

> The Gerrhaeans asked the king not to abolish the gifts the gods had bestowed on them, perpetual peace and freedom. The king, when the letter had been interpreted to him, said that he granted their request ... When their freedom had been ratified, the Gerrhaeans crowned at once Antiochus with five hundred talents of silver, a thousand talents of frankincense, and two hundred talents of the so-called *stakte* (oil of myrrh or cinnamon). (Polyb. XIII 9,4-5)

The whole operation was certainly more than a mere act of piracy (cf. Roueché/Sherwin-White 1985; Salles 1987). This policy was maintained under Antiochus IV and only abandoned when land control of Iran and Babylonia was threatened in the later second century. The Seleucids' recognition of, and emphasis on, the value and importance of the gulf trade (and the land route to India) again illustrates how they were concerned to exploit and control the central trade routes of the middle east, like the Achaemenid and Assyrian empires before them (Salles 1987; Potts 1990: I, 315-53).

All of this makes it clear that there was real substance to the achievements of Antiochus III's *anabasis*. While in the case of Commagene and of North Armenia, it is unclear whether new territories were being added (a possible, but far from certain, implication of Memnon's reference to Antiochus as 'king of Syria, Commagene and Judaea' (*FGrH* 434 F18), is that Commagene, like 'Judaea,' was a new acquisition), control was reasserted and relations restored where these had slipped; Parthia and Bactria were back under Seleucid suzerainty for another quarter of a century, the northern Arab-Persian gulf and the middle east were under the control, as much as was ever possible in an ancient empire, of a strong king. No wonder that Antiochus was named 'great' as a result (the *terminus ante quem* for this is now known to be 202, when in the Scythopolis dossier Antiochus is given the epithet *megas*: see p. 49). Polybius' summary of this period of Antiochus' reign may, after all, hit the nail on the head:

> This was the extreme limit of the march of Antiochus into the interior, through which he subjected to his rule not only the satraps of the interior but the coastal cities and the dynasts on this side of Taurus, and in a word he strengthened his kingdom by overawing all his subjects with his daring and energy. For it was this campaign which made him appear worthy of royalty, not only to the people of Asia but to those in Europe as well. (Polyb. XI 39,14-16)

In fact Antiochus moved from his campaign in the Arab-Persian gulf to Anatolia, where, in 204, he, his court and army are attested as benefactors of Teos (see below pp. 207-8), which the king drew into the Seleucid kingdom after it had been subject to Attalus I of Pergamum. What else he did in Anatolia during this visit we do not know, but the incessant work and huge journeys of the king are revealed.

In 202, Antiochus III began a dynamic campaign which won from the Ptolemies lasting control for the Seleucids of Coele Syria, Phoenicia and the coast of Palestine, an area of great strategic and economic attractiveness to rulers of near eastern empires (cf. New Kingdom Egypt, the Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid empires). The fighting was over by 198. The campaigns illustrate well Antiochus' methods towards non-Greek places, notable in the case of Jerusalem for which his famous charter of rights documents the perquisites that populace and élites secured (see pp. 51-2): tax relief, support for religious institutions and practices, special privileging of certain (sizeable) sections of the population. The area of Judaea was of no particular importance to the Seleucids, and so his policy is even more indicative of traditional methods of dealing with non-Greek places in accordance with the customary rights that these held to be their due. Much more important were the ports and agricultural regions of south Syria and Phoenica – compare, for example, the protection of villages against Seleucid soldiery, attested in the dossier from Scythopolis (see pp. 49-50). This dossier also reveals, albeit in a time of war, the close Seleucid administrative control quickly established at the takeover of a new region. The Ptolemaic armies were so thoroughly defeated that Antiochus was safe to campaign, jointly by land and sea, against places in Asia Minor under Ptolemaic rule forming what remained of the Ptolemies' overseas empire. Thus, cities in Pamphylia, Lycia (e.g. Xanthus) and Caria (Amyzon, Iasos, for example) were taken by Antiochus. We can see now, thanks to new inscriptions from Labraunda and Amyzon, much more of the violence and disruption of this campaign for the local peoples (see pp. 59; 131; 165). Several new documents, comprising the orders of high-ranking officials to commanders on the spot against illegal billeting, reveal pillage and order the return of goods removed as booty, or declare and confirm the *asylia* of places (e.g. Xanthus) and their protection. These documents

show how misleading can be the impression of non-violence and tranquillity given by a different type of document (such as those dealing with the political relations between a king and another state after a war), when there is no other evidence. Antiochus' Anatolian campaign (and no doubt his other expeditions) was a rough one for the communities involved, and the awful realities of the local effects of this warfare can here be clearly seen.

Royal state cults

A new development of Antiochus III's reign was the institution of a centralised 'state' cult of himself and his *progonoi*, and a 'state' cult of his queen and wife, Laodice. It is important to re-emphasise that no central cult of Seleucid kings existed before the reign of this king since some commentators continue to confuse the widespread local civic cults of Greek cities for Seleucid kings, which go back to Seleucus I, with a 'centralised' cult, i.e. one organised from the centre, by the king (cf. Bickerman 1938, ch. 7). Likewise there is no evidence in Babylonia, or Iran (Sherwin-White 1983b; 1984), of a state cult, or any cult, for the Seleucid kings before or in Antiochus' reign. There *is* evidence of the old Babylonian practice of offering prayers, dedications, sacrifices to the (Babylonian) gods 'for the life (i.e. spiritual and physical well-being) of the king' (cf. above p. 131). Thus a document from Uruk attests a gift of land to Ishtar 'for the life of Šamaš-šum-ukin, king of Babylon' (667-648: Moore 1935, no. 13). There are several examples from the Seleucid period, such as the clay cylinder foundation inscription of Anu-uballiṭ-Nikarchos (244), *šaknu* (governor) of Uruk in the reign of Seleucus II, who describes his building for the new temple of Anu and Antum and refers to his ceremonial dedication of a gold bolt and gold post (for gates of the temple) as being 'for the life of Antiochus and Seleucus, kings' (quoted above p. 150). A later building inscription of Anu-uballiṭ-Kephalon commemorates his 'foundation' of the Anu temple 'for the life of Antiochus the king, my ruler' (201: Falkenstein 1941, 6-8, l. 10). Comparable is a hellenistic cuneiform contract from Uruk recording the dedication of a slave girl 'for the life of the king' (quoted on pp. 136-7). A newly published astronomical diary fragment, from the reign of Antiochus IV (172/1), also valuably documents this procedure at Babylon, where a Seleucid general makes offerings in the great sanctuary of Esagila:

> That month, day 11 (IV/-/140), the commander (^{lú}GAL.ERIN) of the troops of [...] entered Babylon. Day 13, to the temple [...] he made 6 sacrifices to Bel, Beltiya, the great gods ... of the kings. That day he entered the *akitu* temple. In front of Ishtar of Babylon (and) the crowns(?) of the great gods which are set up in it, he performed 3

> sacrifices for Bel, Beltiya, Ishtar of Babylon, the great gods, and for the life of the kings, and prostrated himself. Day x, he went out from <Babylon and to> Seleucia, the royal city which is on the Tigris and the royal canal. (Sachs/Hunger 1989, no. –171)

Furthermore, the Babylonian tradition of making offerings before the images of ruling and deceased kings is not generally thought to imply actual deification of the king (Labat 1939, 369ff.; Frankfort 1948, 302-6). Nor does a new Babylonian chronicle fragment (Sherwin-White 1983b) relate to a royal cult, local or state, for the king Seleucus II:

> The eighty-eighth year of Seleucus, the king (= 224): in the month Nisan, the *šatammu* of Esagil established, according to the command of the king, precisely in accordance with the parchment letter which the king had sent before, as [the offer]ing of Esagil [N] shekels of silver from the royal treasury, from his own house, eleven fat oxen, one hundred fat ewes, eleven fat ducks for the offering, within Esagil, to Bel, Beltiya, and the great gods and for the ritual (*dullu*) of Seleucus, the king, and his sons. (*ABC* 13b, ll. 3-8; the king referred to is Seleucus II, not the reigning king Seleucus III)

This document is of great interest in revealing the close interaction of king and the chief Babylonian administrator of the great sanctuary of Esagila, the king's underwriting of rites and sacrifices at Babylon and *dullu* (work – sacrifices) either on behalf of (cf. above) or by the king. However, the separation of this from any royal cult is clearly established both by the distinction on the one hand between the offerings to be made 'to Bel, Beltiya and the great gods' and on the other hand the *dullu* of Seleucus, and also by the fact that the cuneiform 'dingir' (= god) sign used, as here, before the names of deities, is not utilised in reference to King Seleucus. Moreover, it is a characteristic of the Seleucid state royal cults, when instituted by Antiochus III, that neither that of the king and his *progonoi*, nor that of Laodice, included the king's sons, whereas Greek civic cults did (see below), and Babylonian offerings 'for the life of the king' could too. Furthermore, the new astronomical diary fragments, when attesting the activity of Seleucid kings, including Antiochus III (see above pp. 130-1 and below p. 216), in the sanctuaries of Babylon, show the king 'merely' offering sacrifices and participating in Babylonian cult practices. To this can be compared the practice of offering burnt sacrifices to Yahweh on behalf of the king in the temple of Jerusalem (I *Maccabees* 7.33). It is thus clear that in these non-Greek contexts there is no shred of evidence to support the notion of a royal cult of the Seleucid monarchs.

So far, three copies have survived of Antiochus III's edict (dated to

193), which attests his organisation of a state royal cult of 'us' and the *progonoi* and of Laodice. These were found in far-flung parts of his empire: at Laodicea-Nihavend in Media (Robert 1949; Austin 158), from near Kermanshah (Robert 1967), both on the major route from Seleucia-Tigris to Ecbatana, and in Anatolia at Eriza in Phrygia (*RC* 36-7: the date of 204 in *RC* needs emending to 193):

> (I) Menedmus to Apollodorus and the magistrates and city of Laodicea, greetings. Appended below is [the] copy of the edict sent to us in writing [by the king]. Do you therefore conform to the instructions given and see to it that the edict is inscribed on a stone stele and set up in the most distinguished sanctuary in the city. Farewell. Year 119, on the 10th of the month of Panemus.
>
> King Antiochus to Menedmus greetings. Wishing to increase further the honours (*timai*) of our sister and Queen Laodice, and believing this to be most imperative for us, not only because of the affection and care she shows in her life with us, but also because of her piety with regard to religion (*to theion*), we continue to perform affectionately everything that is fitting and just [for her] to receive from us, and in particular it is our decision that just as chief-priests (*archiereis*) of us are appointed throughout the kingdom (*basileia*) so too chief-priestesses should be established in the same [districts (*topoi*)] who shall wear gold crowns with her portrait on them, and who shall [also] be inscribed on (business) contracts after the chief-priests of our [ancestors] and of us. Therefore since Laodice (daughter of Antiochus III) has been appointed in the districts under [your] command, [let] everything [be done] in conformity with what is writtten above and let the copies of the letters be inscribed on stelae and set up in the most distinguished [places], so that [our policy] (*proairesis*) towards our sister should be made manifest in these matters too now and for the future. Year 119, [on the ... of the month of Xandicus]. (Laodicea-Nihavend: Robert 1949; Austin 158)
>
> (II) ... (the opening lines are not preserved) we continue to perform affectionately everything that is fitting and just for her to receive from us, and in particular it is our decision that just as chief-priests of us are appointed throughout the *b*[*asileia*] so too chief-priestesses should be established in the same districts who shall wear gold crowns with her portrait on them, and who shall also be inscribed on business contracts after the chief-priests of our ancestors and of us. Therefore since Laodice has been appointed in the districts under your command, let everything be done in conformity with [what has been written above] and let the [copies] of the letters be inscribed on stelae and set up in the most distinguished places, so that our policy towards our sister should be made manifest in these matters too now and for the future. Year 119, on the 9th of the month of Xandicus.
>
> Menedemus to Thoas, greetings. Appended is the copy of the edict sent to us in writing by the king. Do you therefore conform to the instructions given and see to it that the edict is inscribed on a stone stele and set up in the most distinguished of the sanctuaries in the military zone (*phylake*). Year 119, on the 3rd of the month of Panemus. (Kermanshah: Robert 1967)

(III) Anaximbrotus to Dionytas, greetings. Appended below is the copy of the edict sent to us in writing by the king concerning the appointment of Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy son of Lysimachus, as chief-priestess of the queen in the satrapy. Carry out the instructions as he thinks best and see to it that the copies are inscribed on a stone stele and set up in the most conspicuous places. Farewell. Year 119, on the 19th of the month Artemisius.

(The first 16 lines of the king's letter to Anaximbrotus are naturally the same as in nos. I and II and are omitted here.) ... Therefore since Berenice, the daughter of our relative Ptolemy son of Lysimachus has been appointed in the districts under your command, let everything be done in conformity with what is written above and let the copies of the letters be inscribed on stelae and set up in the most conspicuous places, so that our policy towards our sister should be made manifest in these matters too now and for the future. (Eriza, Phrygia: *RC* 37, 36)

These documents are primarily concerned with Antiochus' institution and organisation of chief-priesthoods for Laodice through the kingdom, i.e. in each satrapy, and with the publicising of his appointments of the chief-priestesses for it. It is evident that copies of his letter were sent to the satraps empire-wide, whose task seems mainly to have consisted in selecting the most prominent places in their province for publication of the king's decisions. Thus, Menedemus, satrap of Media (and later viceroy of the Upper Satrapies: Robert 1950, 73-5) wrote to at least two officials in his satrapy, to Thoas, commander of the military zone round Kermanshah, and to the governor and city of Laodicea-Nihavend.

What these inscriptions most sensationally and incidentally reveal is the existence of a similarly centrally organised system of chief-priesthoods of, and therefore a cult of, Antiochus himself and former rulers (*progonoi*), besides the separate royal cult of Laodice. Unfortunately it is extremely hard to reconstruct and understand the purposes and functions of these cults from the brief reference simply to chief-priesthoods of the *progonoi* and of 'us', and to the chief-priesthoods of Laodice. But clearly Antiochus III, unlike former Seleucid kings, who from Antiochus I had established cults only posthumously for their predecessor, created new state royal cults, first, of himself, the reigning, living king, linked with his predecessors, and, secondly, of his queen.

The function of Antiochus' circulating edict was also to publicise (and justify) his motives for elevating Laodice, not all of the nuances of which can be teased out. Antiochus conceptualised his decision partly in the contemporary language of *euergesia*, honours (*timai*) in reward for services, namely Laodice's loyal and caring role as Antiochus' wife and queen, with all the public duties this in fact entailed (cf. above pp. 127-8) – implicit also are considerations of a readjustment of a hierarchy whereby Laodice should not be left behind Antiochus. Also, he

especially chose to cite Laodice's piety (*eusebeia*) for 'religion' (*to theion*), of course a just reason for being honoured, but in the context of a king's creation of a cult of his queen, and all the contradictions and controversy that could ensue, this may also be a statement, as a sort of hidden agenda, that the institution of such a cult was not irreligious or impious in Laodice's case (see below). The whole construct reaffirms hierarchy carefully; king and *progonoi* as recipients of cult; queen as recipient of cult. The king's offspring, not included in the royal cults (see below) of the Seleucid state, could serve in it at the top as chief-priests and chief-priestesses, as Antiochus' daughter Laodice was meant to, as chief-priestess of the satrapy of Media, as could the sons and daughters of important Seleucid officials and of dynasts, such as Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy son of Lysimachus, in Phrygia. The state royal cult stands in sharp contrast to Greek civic royal cults, which came to include the royal offspring, and to the offerings in Babylonian temples made 'for the life of the king', where his sons were also mentioned. We now know, from the dossier concerning the appointment of Nicanor as chief-priest of the sanctuaries north of Taurus (see above pp. 43-4), the attributes Antiochus sought in appointees – good service, loyalty (*pistis*) and goodwill (*eunoia*), which underlies one function of the system, that of reward and perhaps promotion. Below the chief-priests and chief-priestesses may have been priests and priestesses, about whom there is no information.

Nothing, alas, is known as such of the content of these state royal cults, of the nature of the sacrifices, the ceremonies and festivals, nor of the types of monument – altars, statues, precincts, temples – that might have been built. All we know is Antiochus' wish for his policy towards Laodice to be 'clear' and made visible in a most concrete way by the establishment of *stelai* recording it in the most conspicuous and distinguished places in the satrapies. But Antiochus' royal state cults did not exist in a cultic void; the local, civic royal cults for himself and for Laodice perhaps provided the building blocks on which Antiochus was encouraged to construct, from the centre, his royal cults. In connection with Antiochus' institution of a centralised cult of Laodice, Gauthier (1989) has recently suggested, in the context of his publication of the new Seleucid documents from Sardis, that the growing corpus of evidence on the civic cults set up, as is now attested, as early as 213 at Sardis (see pp. 181-2) and later at Teos (204-203) and at Iasos (*c.* 195) in Asia Minor, not only gives us a picture of a great queen, but also prefigures and somehow may have prepared the way for the institution, in 193, of an official state cult of the queen. Of course, if this were true of Laodice, it could also be relevant to Antiochus' institution of the cult of himself and his *progonoi*. Already in 213, after the recapture of Sardis, in return for unknown benefactions (i.e. the discourse of euergetism, see p. 132), Laodice was

granted a *temenos* (a precinct named the Laodikeion), an altar, a festival each year with sacrifices to Zeus Genethlios (Laodice, as daughter of Mithridates of Pontus was not descended from the Seleucid *genos*, i.e. from Apollo), probably on the birth-date of Laodice, on behalf of the safety of her brother king Antiochus, her children and herself (see pp. 181-2). But she was not 'deified' as such, had no priestess and sacrifices were to Zeus Genethlios. We do not know what *timai* Antiochus personally received from Sardis. At Teos (204), Laodice and Antiochus received a cult statue (*agalma*), by the statue of Dionysus in the temple, an altar of King Antiochus and of his 'sister', Queen Laodice, as well as sacrifices:

> [He (Antiochus III) decided] to become the common [benefactor] both of the other Greek [cities and] of our city; and he was previously, while in the (territory) on the other side of the Taurus, the cause of many good things for us; and, having arrived in our vicinity, he restored affairs to a prosperous condition. During his stay in our city, he observed us weakened in both our public and private affairs by the continuous wars and the greatness of the levies we were paying; and wishing to be reverent to the god to whom he consecrated our city and land <and> desiring to show favour to both the People and the association of Dionysiac artists, he himself came into the assembly (and) granted that our city and land be sacred and inviolate and exempt from tribute. As for the other levies we used to pay to King Attalus (I), he promised that we would be relieved (of them) through him so that, if an improvement in the city's affairs occurred, he would receive not only credit for a benefit (conferred) on the People but also for its salvation. Further, he spent time in the city together with his Friends and military forces, giving a most notable demonstration of his confidence to all men; and after these events, he has continued to be the cause of many good things for us, furnishing an example to all the Greeks of the way he deals with his benefactors and those who are favourably inclined towards him. Some of the benefactions through which our city is becoming prosperous he has completed, and some he will complete in the future. Having written to the People, he indicated that it ought to send [him] an embassy which would discuss matters (which) he said, he believed also would be advantageous to the People. The People, having sent as ambassadors Dionysius, son of Apollo[...], Hermagoras, son of Epimenes, Theodorus, son of Zopyrus, he declared to them [that] he had freed the city forever, just as he had promised, from the tribute we paid to King Attalus. Having written also about these matters, he said he had given instructions to the [ambassadors] to report to us, and the ambassadors did report these things to the People. Likewise, his sister, Queen Laodice, also on every occasion continues to have the same opinion as the king, and [...] in her kindly feelings toward the city she shows herself to be fervent and in acts of goodwill zealous; and the People has received the greatest goods from both. In order therefore that we also on every occasion shall appear as returning appropriate thanks to both king and the queen and surpassing ourselves in the honours (given) to them for

their benefactions and that the People appear to all as strongly inclined toward the expression of gratitude, with good fortune, it shall set up beside the statue of Dionysus marble statues of the finest (quality) and most religiously appropriate (character) of both King Antiochus and his sister Queen Laodice, in order that, having granted that the city and its land be sacred and inviolate and freed us from tribute and shown favour in these ways to both People and the asociation of Dionysiac artists, they may receive from everyone honours to the extent possible, and that, sharing the temple and other things with Dionysus, they may be the common saviours of our city and jointly confer benefits on us ... (Teos, 204/3: P. Herrman *Anadolu* 9 (1965), 29-159; Burstein 33)

At Iasos, Laodice was worshipped, identified with the goddess Aphrodite. At Heraclea-Latmus in Caria, Antiochus III, Laodice and their offspring received cult honours, as a newly published inscription of 197 attests:

(I) (Letter of Antiochus III to the Council and People of Heraclea-Latmus) [...] Laodice and my son Antiochus with reference to the honours (*timai*) voted [by you] which you have made clear with crowns and equally by crowning Seleucus and Mithridates, the other of our sons, [crowns which] the ambassadors brought and they greeted us on behalf of the People and gave the decree about the honours and talked in person about each thing in accordance with what had been recorded. Both these honours and the crowns we accept in a friendly spirit and we praise you for your zeal. Wishing also, for the future, to take care of you we ratify for you what has been agreed by Zeuxis and with regard to the agreed amount for the oil for the young men (*neoi*) we ordain each year 30 measures more. For the [future] expenditure for the construction of (?repairs to) the aqueduct we think [it necessary] for grants to be made from the royal treasury for three years, and have written about these things to [...] the *dioiketes*.

(II) (Letter of Zeuxis) ... Zeuxis greets the Council and People. Your ambassadors (there follow the names of twenty) brought the decree in accordance with which you thought it necessary, since we have recovered for the king the city which belonged from the begining to his *progonoi*, for sacrifices to be made to the gods and to the kings and to their children and for the future alike for these to happen each month on the sixth day of the last ten, and for ambassadors to be chosen to clarify about the *stenochoria* (shortage of land) that has come about with regard to the city from past times because of the wars and devastations, and to urge that what has been agreed by the kings be observed so that also after this ... (there follow decisions on various grants of fiscal immunity to help get the city back on its feet). (Heraclea-Latmus: Wörrle 1988)

Against this rich background of a mosaic of civic royal cults now attested in the empire for Antiochus and Laodice (and in several instances their offspring), Gauthier (1989, 45f., 73ff.) seems right to suggest that Antiochus' decision to 'deify' or in some way to apotheosise

himself – 'us' – with his *progonoi* and Laodice was not a whim of an all-powerful sovereign dictated only by personal (and megalomaniac?) wishes. There was some sort of reciprocal interchange in the elaboration of these centralised royal cults. Whatever the particular forms these state cults took, the pre-existence of available localised cults and ceremonies was what facilitated the construction of royal cult from the centre, and, for all we know, gave these cults an impact for those participating (and a justification for their initiator? cf. Bloch 1987). But further analysis of Antiochus' publicly stated motives for awarding himself divine status is a matter largely of surmise, since no document has survived dealing directly with his institution of the cult of 'the *progonoi* and us'. The motives that he refers to in the case of Laodice are in terms of *timai* ('honours'; cf. pp. 204-6) in return for her services as his wife and queen, and her piety. There is little doubt that he used the language of *euergesia* with regard to his own cult, perhaps his benefactions of his subjects (cf. the Teos decree, pp. 207-8, for example), and perhaps, in his case, his loyalty to the policies of his *progonoi*. Anyhow a continuity between living king and the *progonoi* – an emphasised feature of Antiochus III's reign in his cultic, colonial and imperial policies (cf. p. 211) – is focussed upon in the cult of 'them' and 'us'. It is almost certain that he would also have stressed his own piety. Just as Antiochus showed extreme sensibility to the requirements that the status of monarchy demanded of a human being (cf. above p. 199), so much more necessary was this in the case of his own divine status. Indeed it is possibly also because of a perceived need for those 'deified' to be seen to have been people of outstanding distinction and achievement that Antiochus did not include his offspring in the cult, but instead made space for them to act as chief-priests and chief-priestesses. How far Antiochus had a feeling or conviction of personal, heroic achievements is impossible to say. How far did the widespread civic cults for himself, projecting good and superhuman aspects of the ruler, provide images that the king perhaps came to identify with, and therefore was in part motivated by, to establish a centralised cult of himself ('us') and so also, by mutual reinforcement, maintain the solidarity of the group – rulers and ruled (cf. Money-Kyrle 1937 [1978])?

It is a pity that Antiochus' institution of his own cult cannot be dated precisely since it cannot be given an exact historical context, perhaps coinciding, for example, with the termination of one of his phases of great conquests. But it is notable that his edict uses the present tense of the verb with regard to the appointment of chief-priests for him. If, as is possible, this is to be taken literally (so Welles: *RC*, p. 159), then we would obtain the year 193 as the date also for his institution of his own royal cult, a time when he had achieved the greatest expansion of the kingdom and proved himself among the great Seleucid kings. It is

important to emphasise that Antiochus kept his cultic status, as in some way 'divine', strictly separate from his other spheres of activity as king – he never used the word *theos*, for example, of himself either in documents, or on his coinage (contrast Antiochus IV, who did introduce the title *theos* on his coins, as succeeding Seleucid rulers often did: cf. Bickerman 1938, 25). This split between the king as 'divine' and his human capacities is likely to have been an attempt to avoid the controversies and contradictions that his ambiguous position entailed.

It is a much-debated question for whom these state royal cults were intended (i.e. Greeks only, or non-Greeks as well), raising as it does the spectre of the imposition of Greek cult on non-Greek places, since it is a reasonable assumption that the cult was articulated according to the rituals and ceremonies of Greek (royal) cults, of which there is no evidence in Babylonia or elsewhere in Antiochus' reign. Bickerman, whose account of Antiochus' state royal cults is still seminal (1938, ch. 7), concluded that they were established for the court, army and people subject to the king, i.e. not in places with some autonomy from the king. In this way he could, for example, explain the absence from Babylonian documents of any evidence (for example in contracts) of these state royal cults (Bickerman 1938, 249ff.). He wrote before the discovery of the copies from Kermanshah and Laodicea-Nihavend, but these do not drastically alter his view. What they reveal is where Antiochus' decisions about the cult of Laodice were to be publicised – in the most conspicuous places within the satrapies – which the satraps, whose decisions have been preserved, chose, unsurprisingly, to be the most famous sanctuary or sanctuaries (Antiochus' language shows that he envisaged multiple publication in the satrapies). It follows from the satrapal-based organisation of the system of chief-priesthoods and chief-priestesses that the chief-priests and priestesses celebrated whatever cult rituals were invented for them to oversee, in the satrapies, probably in the satrapal capitals – for example, Sardis, Seleucia-Tigris and Susa. There can be little doubt that spectators, if not participants, included anyone who enjoyed a festival, Greeks and non-Greeks, quite apart from all the traders for whom festivals were days of business. As Bickerman concluded (1938, 257), 'The cult of the kings appeared to the ancients always as one of the results (whether regrettable or praiseworthy) of the superhuman position that a monarch takes among men. "Because it was an error of gentiles", says Saint Jerome, "to hold every man above them for a god." (Hieron. P.L. XXV 504).'

The Seleucid conflict with Rome

It is well known that it was Antiochus III's successes in Anatolia, especially betwen 197 and 193, and his active policy of reasserting Seleucid claims to Thrace, which eventually brought him into collision

with the expanding, empire-building republic of Rome. For the high profile given to Antiochus' rebuilding of Lysimachea as a 'capital' the following quotations from Livy (using Polybius) and Appian are valuable:

> From there (Madytus in the Thracian Chersonese) he reached Lysimachea simultaneously with all his land and sea forces (197/6). He found it deserted and almost completely lying in ruins (a few years before the Thracians had captured and sacked the city and set it on fire), and he became anxious to restore a distinguished city which enjoyed a favourable position. And so he started work on every part of the project at once, the reconstruction of the roofs and walls, redeeming those of the people of Lysimachea who had fallen into slavery, searching out and bringing together those who had scattered in flight throughout the Hellespont and Chersonese, and enlisting new settlers whom he attracted by the hope of advantages and sought in every way to make as numerous as possible. At the same time, in order to dispel the fear of the Thracians, he set off in person with half of his land forces to ravage the neighbouring parts of Thrace, while the other half he left together with all his naval allies to work on the reconstruction of the city. (Livy XXXIII 38)

> Then he crossed over to Europe (197/6), brought Thrace under his sway, and reduced by force those who would not obey him. He fortified Chersonesus and rebuilt Lysimachea, which Lysimachus, who ruled Thrace after Alexander, built as a stronghold against the Thracians themselves, but which they destroyed after his death. Antiochus repeopled it, calling back the citizens who had fled, redeeming those who had been sold as slaves, bringing in others, supplying them with cattle, sheep, and iron for agricultural purposes, and omitting nothing that might contribute to its speedy completion as a stronghold; for the place seemed to him to be admirable for watching over the whole of Thrace, and a convenient base of supplies for all the other operations that he intended to come about. (Appian *Syr.* 1)

Compare with this another passage:

> Antiochus replied (to the Roman ambassador, in 196), that Thrace had belonged to his *progonoi*, that it had slipped from their grasp when they were occupied elsewhere, and that he had recovered it because he had leisure to do so. He was building Lysimachea as a habitation for Seleucus, his son. (Appian *Syr.* 3)

Thanks to the work of numismatists and to the discovery of new documents, we now know a little more about Seleucid activities and interest in Thrace. We know that from just after Seleucus I's victory over Lysimachus, ruler (*inter alia*) of Thrace, it was regarded as part of the Seleucid heritage (as fruits of victory: cf. pp. 21-2). Antiochus I or II made a treaty with Lysimachea (p. 41) and control of places in Thrace

is illustrated by Seleucid royal mints there in the earlier third century (cf. p. 42). So Antiochus III can more clearly be seen to be attempting to frame the empire to the pattern of Seleucus I. The Romans had no legitimate 'right' to check Antiochus' re-establishment of the heritage of Seleucus I, nor could that heritage have been unfamiliar to the contemporary Greek world, however many pretexts they, or locals, might conjure up. But they did.

As is familiar, the Romans, helped by the cavalry of the kingdom of Pergamum, defeated Antiochus III and a massive army of the Seleucid empire, at the battle of Magnesia in Asia Minor, in 190, followed by naval victories over the Seleucid fleets. The Roman victory was succeeded by negotiations with Antiochus III, which led to the formulation of the famous Peace of Apamea (188), in which Rome laid down terms of peace for Antiochus (Polyb. XXI 4; Austin 161). There are several points to be made. First, certainly Antiochus III suffered a decisive military defeat in Asia Minor, but on the other hand *no* hellenistic army (other than the Parthians!) could or did beat the Roman legionary army, with its superior manoeuvrability (maniples) over the phalanx, terrifying though the sight and impact of the latter was to Roman legionaries, as Polybius' graphic description of their fear on facing the onslaught of the army of Perseus of Macedon vividly depicts (Polyb. XIX 17). Against other combatants, the hellenistic army could be militarily successful when well commanded and gauged to meet the enemy forces expected, as in Antiochus III's campaigns and those of Antiochus VII (against the Parthians: cf. Fischer 1970). Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Seleucid manpower for cavalry and infantry (phalanx) was maintained through the third into the second century by drawing on the varied peoples of the empire, usually underestimated or excluded from examinations of the war effort and capability of the Seleucids (cf. pp. 53-7). The evidence for the maintenance of numbers is Polybius' description of the armies mobilised by Antiochus III at the battle of Raphia (217) and at Magnesia (Livy XXXVII 40-1, using Polybius) and that by Antiochus IV for his great pageant (*pompe*: Polyb. XXX 25-6, cf. below pp. 220-1): 17,000 at Raphia, 20,000 at Magnesia, with a cavalry (based on the breeding areas of Armenia and Media). The breakdown of the Seleucid army for Magnesia, analysed by Griffith (1968) and now Bar-Kochva (1989; cf. Fig. 2), is instructive:

> The king's battle line was more varied (than the Roman), as it was made up of many peoples who differed in their weapons and their auxiliary forces. There were 16,000 infantry armed in the Macedonian way, who are called the *phalangitae* (members of the phalanx). They held the centre of the battle line, and their front was divided into ten parts, each part being separated by a gap where two elephants were positioned. The

battle line extended from the front to a depth of 32 men. These were the best troops in the king's army, and in general presented a frightening appearance, especially because of the elephants towering so high above the troops. The elephants themselves were huge, and their appearance was enhanced by their frontlets and crests, and by the towers placed on their backs, on which stood four soldiers in addition to the driver. To the right of the *phalangitae* the king placed 1,500 'Gallo-Greek' cavalry (Galatian), and next to these 3,000 mail-clad cavalry (they called them *cataphracti*). To these was added a squadron of about 1,000 cavalry, called the *agema*; they consisted of picked Median troops, and mixed cavalry of many races from the same region. Next to these was placed a herd of 16 elephants in support. On this side was the royal guard, with its wing slightly forward; they were called Silver Shields from the kind of weapons they used. Then came 1,200 Dahae, who were mounted archers, then 3,000 light-armed troops, consisting of Cretans and Trallians in almost equal numbers. Next to these came 2,500 Mysian archers. The extreme right wing was formed by a mixture of Cyrtaean slingers and Elymaean archers, to a total of 4,000. On the left wing, next to the *phalangitae* came 1,500 'Gallo-Greek' cavalry, and 2,000 Cappadocians armed in the same way; these had been sent to the king by Ariarathes (IV). Then came a mixture of auxiliary forces of all kinds, 2,700 in all, and 3,000 mail-clad cavalry and another 1,000 cavalry, the royal squadron, with lighter protection for themselves and their horses but otherwise equipped in the same way (as the mail-clad cavalry); they were mostly Syrians, with an admixture of Phrygians and Lydians. In front of this body of cavalry were chariots with scythes and camels of the kind they call dromedaries. They had as mounts Arab archers, with slender swords four cubits long (but see above p. 56), which allowed them to reach the enemy from such a height. Then came another host, equal in numbers to the host on the right wing, consisting first of 'Tarentines' (a cavalry force), then of 2,500 'Gallo-Greek' cavalry, then of 1,000 Neocretans and 1,500 Carians and Cilicians armed in the same way, and the same number of Trallians, and 3,000 men armed with a *caetra* (a small Spanish shield); these were Pisidians, Pamphylians and Lycians. Then were placed auxiliary forces of Cyrtaeans and Elymaeans in equal numbers to those on the right wing. The king himself was on the right wing; Seleucus (his son) and Antipater (the son of his brother) he put in command of the left wing. The centre of the battle line was placed under three men, Minnion, Zeuxis and Philippus the master of the elephants. (Livy XXXVII 40-1; Austin 160)

As in the period of the Successors, great use was made of Iranian and other local forces to supplement the Macedonians and Greeks (cf. pp. 53-6 above). The military machine of the Seleucid army, when mobilised, was as impressive and terrifying as the army of Perseus had been to the Romans, as is reflected, even allowing for underlying propaganda and distortion, in the following passage:

> Early next morning the king (Antiochus IV) broke camp and rushed his army along the road to Bethzacharia; there his forces were drawn up for battle and the trumpets were sounded. The elephants were roused for

> battle with the juice of grapes and mulberries. The great beasts were equipped with coats of chain-mail and bronze helmets (cf. the formation at Magnesia). Five hundred picked horsemen were also assigned to each animal. These had been stationed beforehand where the beast was; and wherever it went, they went with it, never leaving it. Each animal had a strong wooden turret fastened upon its back with a special harness, by way of protection, and carried four fighting men as well as an Indian driver. The rest of the cavalry Lysias stationed on either flank of the army, to harass the enemy while themselves protected by the phalanxes. When the sun shone on the gold and bronze shields, they lit up on the hills, which flashed like torches. Part of the king's army was deployed over the heights, and part over the low ground. They advanced confidently and in good order. All who heard the din of this marching multitude and its clashing arms shook with fear. It was a great and powerful array indeed. (I *Maccabees* 6.33-41)

There is controversy over the question of the military obligations to the king of different parts of the empire in war, which would affect estimates of the numbers available to the Seleucids and interpretations of the character of Seleucid policy with regard to the non-Greek elements (see p. 53). Scenes of mobilisation, reminiscent of descriptions of the mobilisation of Achaemenid armies, described in I *Maccabees* (11.38, 3.27; cf. Polyb. V 3), reveal both the Greek and the non-Greek elements that the Seleucids relied upon (cf. Magnesia above), as in the time of the Successors (cf. pp. 53-5; 123). The use of Iranian archers and Iranian heavy cavalry continued to be a feature and strength of the Seleucid army. Furthermore, given the basic agreement between the composition of the Seleucid armies at the battles of Raphia in 217 (i.e. before Antiochus III's *anabasis*) and at Magnesia in 190, it seems clear that the use of non-Greeks in the army was typical. It reflects the pattern of the developing Seleucid empire in the late fourth century. This is not surprising if the historian manages to free herself from a nexus of ideology that imputes to the Seleucids modern colonial fears about 'arming the natives', quite out of key with their imperial inheritance, namely the use by near eastern empires of 'subjects' within the army. We must remember that no breakdown of the Seleucid army survives before the reign of Antiochus III. Polybius was a careful commentator on the armies of this period; it is highly signficant that he does not comment on innovations when describing the composition of Seleucid armies, as he could have done had there been any (*pace* Bar-Kochva 1989, 12 and n. 11).

Rome, in the person of Scipio, victor over Antiochus III, imposed tough (but normal) terms by which Rome took over the fruits of victory, Antiochus' territorial possessions north of the mountain range of the Taurus, including Lydia, Phrygia, Caria and Mysia, redistributing them to allies (e.g. Eumenes of Pergamum and the island of Rhodes), or

granting independence to individual cities, to avoid, for the moment, the necessity for a long-term and hence expensive physical presence. So, in Asia Minor, Antiochus was left with his possessions south of the Taurus – the satrapies of Pamphylia and of Rough and Smooth Cilicia (cf. Livy XXXVIII 38,4-5). There were restrictions on the Seleucid navy's access to the Aegean (see p. 62) and on the possession of the elephant force (not implemented until the reign of Antiochus V in 163/2, when the Romans hamstrung Seleucid elephants, see Polyb. XXXI 2):

> He shall surrender all the elephants at Apamea (the breeding area in Syria), and shall have none henceforth. (Polyb. XXI 42,12)

Conclusion

Despite the gloomy utterances of historians viewing this from the Greco-Roman perspective, the Seleucid empire was neither finished off nor ruined by the enforced removal of most of its Anatolian empire. How could it be? By comparison with many ancient (and modern) empires, Antiochus still ruled a huge realm, from the south of modern Turkey, through Syria and Palestine, to the Fertile Crescent, and thence to Iran and Central Asia – a fact which cannot be sufficiently stressed against those scholars postulating a slow decline from the beginning of the Seleucid kingdom. From Cilicia, to the borders of ancient Iran, from the river Oxus to the Arab-Persian gulf, from Seistan to Palestine, the Seleucids ruled, directly or through local rulers subject to them. It is ludicrous to think that now all was over with the Seleucid empire. There were great resources of manpower and of wealth, though temporary shortfalls of ready cash (for the tribute of one thousand talents of silver a year to Rome for the next ten years) did disrupt, for example, relations with some temples, treasures from which, in exceptional cases, were earmarked for removal. This was done by both Antiochus III and Antiochus IV in Elymais at terrible cost to themselves (i.e. deaths) in Iran (D.S. XXVIII 3, XXIX 15; Strabo XVI 1,18: death of Antiochus III when attempting to plunder the temple of Bel/Zeus in Elymais; I *Maccabees* 3.31, 37; 6.1-3; II *Maccabees* 1.13-17; 9.1; Polyb. XXXI 9; D.S. XXXI 18a; cf. Holleaux 1942, 255-79: death of Antiochus IV when trying to plunder a temple of Anaïtis in Elymais). This was very much against the regular Seleucid policy, so far as it can be traced, of benefactions to temples and, for obvious reasons, was only resorted to in times of financial crisis.

Antiochus III, alongside Seleucus I, Antiochus I and later Antiochus VII, seems to stand out as one of the most dynamic and successful (when viewed from the standpoint of the middle east) of the Seleucid kings. His aims, to consolidate the old empire of the founder of the

dynasty, Seleucus I, was not a flash in the pan, but a follow up (as elsewhere, such as the Arab-Persian gulf, India), of consistent policies or goals, familiar to former Seleucid rulers and to earlier empires in the middle east. Further confirmation of this assessment of the continuing life of the Seleucid empire is now documented by a newly published Babylonian astronomical diary dating to 188/7, which attests that Babylon (and so Babylonia) was, as ever, central to the king, who fulfilled his customary roles by sacrificing in the great sanctuary of Esagila and, like Seleucus I, had reciprocal homage paid to him by the local population. This should, almost certainly, be seen as a carefully orchestrated display of royal power and piety. At the same time the fact that it was possible to mount such a ceremony demonstrates clearly that the Seleucid king's political control was effectively undiminished by the defeat at Magnesia:

> ...] to Babylon [...] ... [...] the house of ... which ... [...] their ... [... sacrificed] cattle and sheep for his life and for the life of his wife and sons (i.e. of Antiochus III) [...] which were in his hands ... this ... this ... three times with the ... merry-making and [...] entered. The 4th, at Kasikila, the great gate of Esangil ... cattle and sheep for Bel, Bel[tiya ... and for the life] of his wife and his sons he sacrificed (and) prostrated himself. The *šatammu* of Esangil and the Babylonians, the assembly of Esangil [...] under it, a crown of 1,000 shekels of gold they presented to King Antiochus. That day, the governor of Babylon (^{lú}*pahat* E^{ki}) [... go]ld they presented to King Antiochus. That day, he went up to Esangil and prostrated himself. That day, he entered the *akitu* temple; cattle and sheep [... T]intir, a golden crown ..., a golden box of Beltiya, and the purple garment of King Nebuchadnezzar, which in the treasure house [...] this [...] came out from the treasure house. That day, he entered his palace. On 5, he [...] made sacrifices in the temple ... On 13, he entered Borsippa. On 14, he [...] to the ziggurat of Ezi[da ...] great ... which ... he took ... of Adad which had come to Borsippa before. Cattle and sheep ... [...]...[...] went up and crossed over to the people inside the ... and ... [...]...[...] went up, and the people which were receding from the beam (?) inside ...[...] the king entered Babylon from Borsippa [...] went up to Esangil. Cattle and sheep [he sacrificed] to Bel, Beltiya and the great gods [...]. That day, in the afternoon, he went out from Babylon to Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, the royal [city]. (Sachs/Hunger 1989 no. –187: rev. 4′-18′)

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Disintegration of the Seleucid Empire

When, how and why did the Seleucid empire, which seemed so firmly established in the early years of the second century, collapse? Such questions are not easy to answer for any empire, and several different views are represented in the literature. It is worthwhile remembering what radical disagreement exists among scholars with respect to the 'Fall of the Roman Empire' – the result of different approaches, varying emphases on facts, and fundamentally divergent ideas about the possible reasons that led to its decline as an imperial power in the west (for a conspectus of different views cf. Demandt 1984; contrast Gibbon who, following a commonly held view in the eighteenth century, dated the fall of the Roman empire to 1453 and the capture of Constantinople, cf. Momigliano 1966, 48-9). Trying to explain the collapse of an empire is *always* a problem (cf. Glassner 1987; Garelli 1974, 125). Some scholars have adopted the attitude that the fall of the Seleucid empire is unproblematical since they see it as already falling apart by the middle of the third century and as essentially in decline soon after the death of its second ruler, Antiochus I (e.g. most recently Will 1979, 264ff.; Walbank 1981, 123ff.; Musti 1984; for criticism of this view cf. Sherwin-White 1987, 2-3). In essence their view is that the Seleucids only ever exercised a weak control over their great territories, that the infrastructure had never been developed strongly enough to sustain a continuous hold, that there was no mechanism that might have helped to centralise rule by, for example, co-opting the support of social élites, and that there was a marked absence of continuity in imperial policy. This view is reflected in the metaphor applied to the Seleucid empire as 'a mosaic' (Bickerman 1938, ch. 1) of different cultures, societies and political entities with an inherent centrifugal tendency (Tarn 1938, 4-5). In the view of the scholar John Davies it was impossible to hold such a pluralist system together for any length of time in the absence of a unifying imperial legal code (such as the eventual creation of a Roman law-code applied to all subjects) to replace the various local law-systems (Davies 1984). A quite different approach is to place the fall of the empire considerably

later and link it to the series of major defeats inflicted on it by foreign powers, such as the great Parthian wars which detached the eastern regions of the empire (Central Asia, Iran, finally Babylonia) at a time when, partly as a result of Roman intervention, the Seleucids were suffering from recurrent dynastic instability and competing claims for the throne (Habicht 1989). This is especially true from the 120s on, and to this have to be added the further threats to Seleucid control of the Fertile Crescent from the Armenian ruler, Tigranes II 'the Great' (*c.* 95). The eventual loss of the Seleucid power-base there and in Iran was disastrous and must be seen as crucial for their inability to survive and fight back successfully. It is important to realise that the chief heirs to the Seleucids were the Parthians, ruling the lion's share of their former territories (Iran, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia).

Roman intervention

Most European historians have an understandably Roman-centered view of events and so tend to exaggerate the part played by Rome in the disintegration of the Seleucid realm. Yet it took the Romans two centuries of hard fighting and diplomatic machinations to establish their control of Greece, western Asia Minor, the Levant and Egypt only – the area east of the Euphrates was never brought under Roman control, while in the second century very large areas of Anatolia were still fully independent. The kingdom of Pontus, for example, was at this time still expanding and increasing its power; Cappadocia and Bithynia were under their own independent kings as was Armenia, while Cilicia was still Seleucid. Indeed, before 128 western Asia Minor was only under Roman suzerainty, not direct control. The dates of 188 (Peace of Apamea), 168 (Battle of Pydna) and 146 (sack of Corinth) mark significant phases in Rome's eastward expansion, but are of relatively slight significance for understanding the end of Seleucid rule.

It is important to remember in this context that Antiochus III has not been dubbed *restitutor orbis* by modern scholars for nothing (but see above p. 190). His extensive campaigns effectively re-asserted Seleucid control and interests in the north-west and east and extended it substantially in the west and north. The collision with Roman interests in Thrace – an area now known to have been one of traditional and continuous Seleucid concern since Seleucus I (see above pp. 211-12) – eventually led to the loss of Seleucid territory in western Asia Minor, but it is worth emphasising that the Seleucid empire was still huge after the battle of Magnesia in 190, which our primarily Rome-centered sources tend to present as a devastating Seleucid defeat, leaving the dynasty impoverished as a result of indemnity demands and with little territory to rule. Yet the Seleucids

still controlled the territory from Cilicia to the frontiers of Pakistan, together with all its resources in manpower and wealth. In the heart of the empire (Babylonia), as the text quoted at the end of Chapter 7 shows (p. 216), Antiochus was at this very moment being linked with the great Babylonian conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar II. There is no echo here of impending disaster or a perception of the empire as shrinking – the opposite is being asserted. The large Roman demands for money (a thousand talents a year) did cause temporary shortfalls in cash, which spoiled in some cases the previously good relations the Seleucids had maintained vis-à-vis various temples (west Iran, Jerusalem) because the kings now attempted to realise necessary assets.

The increasing Roman involvement with the western edges of the Seleucid realm emerges as a very gradual process. When in 168 Antiochus IV invaded Egypt a second time, following Eygptian aggression (the Sixth Syrian War, 170-168), he was taking the logical step of consolidating Antiochus III's conquests in the area. It was sheer coincidence (remarked on by Polybius) that the battle of Pydna against Perseus of Macedon had been won decisively by Rome just before the Seleucid invasion so that the Romans were free to move rapidly to contain and limit their expansion. It was obviously in Rome's current interests to shore up a tottering Egyptian régime against this most dangerous and powerful eastern empire:

> When Antiochus had advanced against Ptolemy in order to take control of Pelusium, he was met by the Roman commander Popilius. The king greeted him by voice from a distance and offered him his right hand, but Popilius presented to him the tablet he had in his hand which contained the Senate's decree, and asked Antiochus to read it first. In my opinion, he did not want to display any mark of friendship before finding out the intentions of the recipient, whether he was a friend or an enemy. When the king had read it, he said he wanted to consult with his Friends on these new developments, but Popilius in reply did something which seemed insolent and arrogant to the highest degree. With a vine stick which he had in his hand he drew a circle around Antiochus and told him to give his reply to the message before he stepped out of that circle. The king was astounded at this arrogance and after hesitating for a moment said he would do everything the Romans asked from him. Thereupon Popilius and his colleagues shook him by the hand and all welcomed him graciously. The decree of the Senate required him to put an end at once to the war with Ptolemy. And so, within a stated number of days, Antiochus withdrew his army to Syria, deeply distressed at what had happened but yielding to present circumstances. Popilius and his colleagues settled matters in Alexandria and urged the kings to preserve harmony. [...] In this way the Romans saved the kingdom of Ptolemy while on the brink of ruin. Fortune so arranged matters with Perseus and the Macedonians, that after being reduced to the last extremity Alexandria and the whole of Egypt were given a fresh lease of life by the fact that Perseus' fate was the first to be decided. For if this had not happened or had not been

> certain, I do not believe that Antiochus would have obeyed the injunction. (Polyb. XXIX 27; Austin 164)

To this humiliation, Antiochus responded with positive efforts to rebuild his image. One that impressed contemporaries most deeply was the gigantic procession mounted by him in 166/5 at Daphne where the dynastically important sanctuary of Apollo was located (for possible arguments in favour of dating this procession in 169, see Geller 1991; against this, see van der Spek 1986, 71-8; 1987, 67-8):

> The festival opened with a procession composed as follows: It was headed by five thousand men in the prime of life armed after the Roman fashion and wearing breastplates and chain-armour. Next came five thousand Mysians, and immediately behind them three thousand Cilicians armed in the manner of light infantry, wearing golden crowns. Next came three thousand Thracians and five thousand Gauls. They were followed by twenty thousand Macedonians of whom ten thousand bore golden shields, five thousand brazen shields and the rest silver shields. Next marched two hundred and fifty pairs of gladiators, and behind them a thousand horsemen from Nisa (Media) and three thousand from Antioch itself, most of whom had crowns and trappings of gold the rest trappings of silver. Next to these came the so-called 'companion cavalry', numbering about a thousand, all with gold trappings, and next the regiment of 'Royal Friends' of equal number and similarly accoutred; next a thousand picked horse followed by the so-called 'agema', supposed to be the crack cavalry corps, numbering about a thousand. Last of all marched the 'cataphract' or mailed horse, the horses and men being armed in complete mail, as the name indicated. Of these too there were about fifteen hundred. All the above wore purple topcoats in many cases embroidered with gold and heraldic designs. Next came a hundred chariots drawn by four elephants and another drawn by a pair, and finally thirty-six elephants in single file with their housings.
>
> It is a difficult task to describe the rest of the procession but I must attempt to give its main features. About eight hundred young men wearing gold crowns made part of it as well as about a thousand fat cattle and nearly three hundred cows presented by the various sacred missions and eight hundred ivory tusks. The vast quantity of images it is impossible to enumerate. For representations of all the gods and spirits mentioned or worshipped by men and of all the heroes were carried along, some gilded and others draped in garments embroidered with gold, and they were all accompanied by representations executed in precious materials of the myths relating to them as traditionally narrated. Behind them came images of Night and Day, of Earth and Heaven, and of Dawn and Midday. The quantity of gold and silver plate may be estimated from what follows. The slaves of one of the royal 'Friends', Dionysius, the private secretary, marched along carrying articles of silver plate none of them weighing less than a thousand drachmae, and six hundred of the king's own slaves went by bearing articles of gold plate. Next there were about two hundred women sprinkling the crowd with perfumes from golden urns, and these were followed by eighty women seated in litters with golden feet and five

hundred in litters with silver feet, all richly dressed. Such were the more remarkable features of the procession.

When the games, gladiatorial shows, and beast-fights, which lasted for the thirty days devoted to spectacles, were over, for the first five succeeding days every one who chose annointed himself in the gymnasium with saffron ointment out of gold jars: of those there were fifteen, and there were the same number of jars with ointment of cinnamon and spikenard. On the succeeding days ointments of fenugreek, marjoram, and orris were brought in, all of exquisite perfume. For banqueting there were sometimes a thousand tables laid and sometimes fifteen hundred, all furnished with the most costly viands. All the arrangements were made by the king in person. (Polyb. XXX 25,2-26,4)

That this lavish display of Seleucid military might and the kingdom's wealth was deliberately intended to emphasise the strength of the Seleucid realm to the world despite Antiochus' withdrawal from Egypt is evident:

> In celebrating his festal games he adopted, in the first place, a policy contrary to that of the other kings. They, while strengthening their kingdoms both in arms and wealth, as far as possible tried to conceal their intentions because of the superiority of Rome. He (sc. Antiochus), however, taking the opposite approach, brought together at his festival the most distinguished men from virtually the whole world, adorned all parts of his capital in magnificent fashion, and having assembled in one spot, and as it were, put upon the stage his entire kingdom, left them (sc. the Romans) ignorant of nothing that concerned him. (D.S. XXXI 16,1)

With this effort of counter-propaganda must also be connected the lavish patronage of the old centres of Greece by Antiochus, a way of rallying support for the Seleucids there while giving concrete demonstrations of the riches the Seleucid kings could still command (Mørkholm 1966, 55-63). Another attempt to offset the setback in Alexandria was that Antiochus planned and set out on an *anabasis* to the Upper Satrapies, a major military campaign on which he had embarked when he was killed. All of these undertakings, falling into the four years of his life after the Egyptian invasion, bear witness to the vigour and speed with which Antiochus recovered face (cf. Mørkholm 1966, 166-80).

An ultimately insidious outcome of the Peace of Apamea (188) was that a younger son of Antiochus III (the later Antiochus IV) had been taken hostage by the Romans, while his older brother, Seleucus IV, succeeded to the Seleucid throne a year later (187). When Seleucus IV was assassinated in 175 by Heliodorus, one of his ministers, Rome's ally, Pergamum, backed the accession of Antiochus IV against the obvious legal heir, Seleucus IV's eldest son, Demetrius (*OGIS* 248; Burstein 38; Austin 162). The latter replaced Antiochus as Roman

hostage, thus sowing the seeds of a split in the succession which was to prove extremely debilitating with two branches of the Seleucid family repeatedly contending against each other for possession of the throne. That this situation was deliberately manipulated and exploited by Rome to serve its own political aims emerges very clearly at Antiochus IV's death in 164. When Demetrius, understandably, assumed that he would now receive senatorial support in acceding to the throne, he found that it suited Rome's current interests better to accept Antiochus IV's son, Antiochus V, as his successor:

> (in the) belief that the youth and weakness of the boy (sc. Antiochus V) who had succeeded to the throne would be of greater advantage to their interests. This became clear from what followed. For they at once appointed as ambassadors Cnaeus Octavius, Spurius Lucretius and Lucius Aurelius and sent them to settle matters in the kingdom as decided by the Senate, since no one would oppose their instructions, as the king was still a boy and the leading men were glad that power had not been entrusted to Demetrius, which is what they had most expected to happen. (Polyb. XXXI 2,7-10)

Highly significant in this context is that Antiochus V's accession allowed the Romans to weaken further the kingship, so centrally important to the stability of the Seleucid state, by providing the opportunity to implement the demilitarisation terms imposed on them after Magnesia (in 188, see above pp. 214-15). This is shown by the end of the passage from Polybius:

> Cnaeus Octavius and his colleagues set out with instructions to burn the decked ships, then to hamstring the elephants and in general to weaken the forces of the kingdom. (Polyb. XXXI 2,11)

When Demetrius managed one year later (162) to escape from Rome and secure the Seleucid throne after all, the Senate did everything to undermine his power by giving substantial backing to Alexander Balas, a pretender to the throne, as a supposed 'son' of Antiochus IV – thus dividing popular support and loyalty to the king within the empire which had always been such a strong unifying force, especially within the army (cf. above p. 125).

Another way in which Rome helped to destabilise the Seleucid state was by providing support for the establishment of an independent Maccabean dynasty in Judaea under John Hyrcanus (135-104) – although it must be remembered that this was only a negligible part of the Seleucid empire in terms of territory and resources. Such support for small secessionist régimes was a general Roman policy replicated elsewhere and finally realised, in the case of the Seleucids (their power by then limited to the area of Syria), by Pompey's termination of the

kingdom and annexation of Syria as a Roman province in 64 (Bellinger 1949; A.N. Sherwin-White 1984, 206ff., 226ff.).

The growth of Parthian power

There are important new perspectives on our picture of the development of the Parthian empire as a result of more careful study of the chronology of infiltration and invasion leading to an eventual take-over of Seleucid Iran only in the mid-second century (see above pp. 84-90). Analysis of Seleucid coin mints and inscriptions, new and old, indicates, first, that this was a much slower process than has been thought and, secondly, that Seleucid rule remained intact there longer than had been assumed. The great Parthian leader who by *c.* 140 had driven the Seleucid forces from Iran was king Mithridates I (170-134; for recognition of his importance cf. Justin XLI 6,1-2; Fischer 1970). There is considerable evidence to show the continuing Seleucid strength in Iran and the Fertile Crescent down to that point, such as the Seleucid mint still functioning at Ecbatana under Demetrius I (162-150), the manumissions from Susa dated exclusively by the Seleucid era certainly down to 142/1, as opposed to ten years later when such texts use double dates (i.e. dating by the Seleucid and Parthian era), and, finally, the dedication at Bisitun in Media in honour of the Seleucid governor of the Upper Satrapies dated to the summer of 148 (see Plates 27 and 28):

> Year 164, month Panemos, Herakles Glorious in Victory Hyakinthos, son of Pantauchos (dedicated) for (i.e. in honour of) the safety of Kleomenes, 'viceroy' of the Upper Satrapies. (This is followed by the beginning of an Aramaic inscription, starting with the year date.) (Robert *Gnomon* 35 (1963), 76)

The gradual loss of Iran to the Parthians and their invasions into Babylonia took place at a time of particularly bitter internecine struggles for the throne between the supporters of the usurper, Alexander Balas, and his descendants and Demetrius II, the effects of which are poignantly evoked by Diodorus (using Polybius):

> Many Antiochenes, in fear and hatred (of Demetrius II), fled the city and wandered all about Syria, biding their time to attack the king. Demetrius, now their avowed enemy, never ceased to murder, banish, and rob, and even outdid his father in harshness and thirst for blood. For in fact his father, who had affected, not a kingly equity, but a tyrant's lawlessness, had involved his subjects in irremediable misfortunes, with the consequence that the kings of this house were hated for their transgressions, and those of the other house were loved for their equity. Hence at any moment there were struggles and continual wars in Syria, as the princes of each house constantly lay in wait for one another. The

> populace, in fact, welcomed the dynastic changes, since each king on being restored sought their favour. (D.S. XXXIII 4,3-4)

All the more remarkable then was Antiochus VII's (138-129) valiant struggle against the growing and more integrated Parthian state (Fischer 1970), for which he was successful in rallying support from Greek and non-Greek communities in Mesopotamia and Iran who united behind him. At this point neither side was in clear control and the outcome hung in the balance. It was only the defeat and death of Antiochus VII in a major battle against Mithridates' successor, Phraates II (Justin XXXVIII 10; D.S. XXXIV/XXXV, 16-17), with all its symbolic impact, that led to eventual Parthian control of the important area of Babylonia, always crucial to an empire spanning the territories from Syria to Iran.

Something of these struggles can be traced in Babylonian texts. Unfortunately, cuneiform dated texts become distinctly sparse in the second and first centuries (although astronomical texts continued to be composed in Akkadian until AD 75, cf. Sachs 1976; Oelsner 1986, 278 n. z); hence, written material from Babylonia is thinner on the ground than at earlier times. Enough exists, however, to allow one to see something of the long-drawn-out conflict between Parthians and Seleucids in the region. Following some texts dated to Alexander Balas and Demetrius II (Oelsner 1975, 26 n. 5; cf. Oelsner 1986, 274-5), a very broken astronomical diary dated to 141 reflects an initial Parthian seizure of Seleucia-Tigris by Mithridates I:

> ...]soldiers(?) were gathered(?)[...
> ...]to(?) the cities of Media[...
> ...] ...? That month (= month iii, i.e. May/June), day 22, gathered (?)[...
> ...]? (in?) the general entered (?) into Akkad[...
> ... Ar]saces (general term meaning the Parthian king), king, to Seleuci[a
> ...
> ... to?] Assyria, which was before him, he went[...
> into Seleuci]a, city of kingship, he entered. That same month, day 28, [he sat on the throne?
> year 171 Ar-sa-ka-a (= Mithridates), king, month 4: that month, day 3, Nica[tor
> ...] Arsaces [king?] ... houses[...
> ...] of Arsaces, king, 'the writings' (= edicts?) in ...
> An]tiochus, Laodice, the lady/queen, to ? (*LBAT* 418; cf. Oelsner 1975, 27-9)

By 12 October of the same year (141) a Babylonian text (*VS* 15, 37) used a double-date for the first time (i.e. dating by Parthian and Seleucid era). It would thus seem that at least from July 141 down to 131 (as far as dated evidence goes) Babylonia was under Parthian control. Then between 130 and 129/8 there are some texts dated by Antiochus (VII), which clearly indicate that the Seleucid king had

succeeded in wresting the area back under his control, thus effecting a temporary check upon Phraates II (Oelsner 1975, 31-2). That it was shortlived (not much over two years) is indicated by the fact that by 128/7 the texts are again dated by the Arsacid era reflecting the reimposition of Parthian control after Antiochus VII's death. According to Diodorus XXXIV/XXXV 21,1, Himerus/Euhemerus (a Hyrcanian, perhaps a Parthian governor) is said to have mistreated Babylonia cruelly, and it is possible that these 'misdeeds' took place in connection with the struggles to re-establish Parthian control of the region and that therefore this incident should be dated between 129 and 127. Another feature of this chaotic period is that in 127 (according to a dated text from Babylon concerning a temple office, Pinches 1890; Unger 1931, 319-23) Hyspaosines, a local dynast based at Charax in Mesene (extreme south of Iraq, see below) extended the area under his control to claim the kingship in Babylon for a while, perhaps an attempt to oppose the Parthians. Only from 126 onwards do the available texts again date by the Arsacid era, henceforth without interruption down to the last dated cuneiform documents. The wretchedly inadequate evidence only allows tiny glimpses of the chaos and conflicts that were obviously a constant feature of the fifteen years between 141 and 126. But the Babylonian evidence provides at least some hints of this unstable and horrific time during which the area must have suffered considerably (cf. Fischer 1970; Oelsner 1975; Oelsner 1986, 274-6). From this point on the Seleucid kings were pushed back west of the Euphrates river, and limited to a comparatively small territory with a very restricted economic base and little chance of mustering sufficient manpower to fight back effectively, especially given the continuing dynastic infighting which became even more intense in the wake of these disastrous setbacks.

The formation of new political units within the empire

An aspect of the Seleucid state in this period that has been given great, perhaps undue, prominence by some historians in relation to the question of its disintegration is the appearance of 'separatist states'; that is, parts of the empire, such as Elymais, Persis, Mesene, Commagene and Judaea apparently sought to establish separate, independent local dynasties, although the chronology of these secessions is not always clear. From the late 160s on, southern Babylonia seems to have split off under a ruler named Hyspaosines who was probably the Seleucid satrap (Tarn 1938, 214; see above); similarly, in Elymais Kamnaskires I (Strabo XVI 1,18; Tarn 1938, 466) also became independent, possibly a little later at the time of the Parthian conquest by Mithridates I (Le Rider 1965, 353-435; Frye 1984, 273). From some point either in the third or early in the second

century a local dynasty of governors (*frataraka*) ruled in Persis, but under the suzerainty of the Seleucid kings. Rather like Kamnaskires and Hyspaosines, they too seem to have become independent rulers only by *c.* 140 as a result of the upheavals caused by the Parthian advance (Frye 1984, 159-61; Wiesehöfer 1986; 1988; in press; Koch 1988; cf. above pp. 30; 76-7). At an unknown date in Antiochus IV's reign Commagene, too, seems to have become a separate state under local rulers who gradually built the region into an independent hellenistic kingdom using Seleucid dynastic names and drawing heavily on Iranian and Greek cultural traditions (cf. Dörner 1975; Colledge 1987, 158-9). Where the ultimate allegiance of such rulers was to lie depended inevitably on the power struggles between the Parthians and Seleucids. It is impossible to make any inferences, on the basis of the tiny bits of evidence for these moves, as to how Seleucid rule was perceived at this time within these regions.

The one area that is well documented in this respect is Judaea, which throws light on the kinds of local complexities and rivalries that could arise in a subject community under Seleucid imperial rule. The central texts on which reconstruction of the events rests are I and II *Maccabees*, extremely hard to analyse because of their highly emotive, biased and even, at times, fictitious character. They reflect a later perception of the revolt against Seleucid rule as a 'Holy War' in which Israel stood alone against the massed hostile forces of the Macedonian and Greek world. They have therefore become a manifesto for the evolving history of Jewish orthodoxy and the definition of Judaism and Jewish identity – all of which has an importance quite divorced from the realities of the fairly small-scale local upheaval that the revolt really was. As with other communities, Antiochus III, like other kings before him, had recognised and actively confirmed and supported the rights of the Jewish *ethnos* to live under its own laws (the Torah) and social conventions subject to the usual Seleucid tax demands, as well as including hefty grants of immunity to leading sections within the community (cf. above pp. 51-2). It seems clear from *Maccabees* that a group, called by the text 'hellenisers' (the exact meaning of which is unclear) and led by the high-priest Jason of Jerusalem, presented themselves as captivated by Greek culture and some typical Greek urban practices. They appear to have begun a move to turn Jerusalem from an *ethnos* centered on the temple with its traditional cult into a *polis* of Greek type and with a Greek dynastic name, Antioch (cf. above pp. 183-4). They themselves approached the king, Antiochus IV, and are thought to have asked for city status, to which the king appears to have agreed – a fact of some interest since, by doing so, he revoked the policy of his father, Antiochus III. In what way this movement resulted in some interruption and a temporary transformation of the Yahweh cult remains highly ambiguous and fiercely debated (Bickerman 1937;

Hengel 1974; 1980; Millar 1978), although the fact that it did so cannot be doubted. A group of pious Jews are presented as being outraged at the sight of their fellow-Jews exercising nude in the gymnasium and wearing new-fangled clothes, such as the, to them, curious Greek hat, the *petasos* (I *Maccabees* 2.15; II *Maccabees* 4.7-14; cf. above pp. 183-4), and, of course, as horrified at the perversion of traditional religious practices. Firm repressive action, using military force, was taken by the Seleucid authorities against the aggressively orthodox rebels who attempted to impose their beliefs and cultic conventions on the Judaean peoples by brutal means. That this persecution of Jews by Antiochus IV was limited to Judaea and probably needs to be understood primarily in political, rather than specifically religious, terms is clear from a petition sent to Antiochus by the Samaritans and granted by him:

> To Antiochus, God Manifest, a petition (*hypomnema*) from the Sidonians in Shechem (i.e. the Samaritans).
>
> Our ancestors, because of a drought in our land, having followed a certain old religious scruple, made it customary to observe the day called among the Jews the Sabbath, and, having built a temple without a name on the mountain called Garizein, they performed at it the appropriate sacrifices. And while you are dealing properly with the Jews because of their evil, your royal agents, thinking that because of kinship we do the same things as they, are fastening (on us) similar charges, although we are originally Sidonians. And this is clear from official documents. We, therefore, ask you, our benefactor and saviour to instruct Apollonios, the district governor, and Nikanor, the royal agent, not to trouble us by fastening (on us) the charges made against the Jews as we are distinct both in origin and custom, and that the temple without a name be called Zeus Hellenios. For, if this happens, we shall cease to be troubled, and, by devoting ourselves to our occupations with security from fear, we shall increase your revenue.
>
> To the Samaritans' request the king sent the following reply:
>
> King Antiochus to Nikanor. The Sidonians in Shechem have delivered a petition which has been recorded. Since those sent by them proved to us in council with the Friends that they have nothing to do with the complaints against the Jews, but that they choose to live using Greek customs, we both free them of the charges and, as for their temple, as they requested, let it be called that of Zeus Hellenios. (Josephus *A.J.* XII 258-63; Burstein 42)

Here it is clear that the Samaritans, who observed and shared many of the religious, legal and cult practices of their neighbours in Judaea, were excluded from the Seleucid persecutions. This brief, but exceedingly bloodthirsty, episode in Judaean as in Seleucid politics was rapidly seen to be unprofitable, with the result that Antiochus IV's successor, the child king Antiochus V, immediately reversed this counterproductive policy and reconfirmed the settlement Antiochus III had made following his conquest of Judaea:

> King Antiochus to his brother Lysias, greeting. Now that our royal father has gone to join the gods (i.e. died), we desire that the peoples of the kingdom be undisturbed in the management of their own affairs. We have learnt that the Jews do not consent to adopt Greek ways, as our father wished, but prefer their own way of life and request that they be allowed to observe their own laws. We choose, therefore, that this people like the rest should be left undisturbed and decree that their temple be restored to them and that they shall regulate their lives in accordance with their ancestral customs. You will do well, therefore, to send to them and give pledges so that they, knowing our policy, will be encouraged and gladly take up their own affairs.
>
> To the people the king's letter ran thus:
>
> King Antiochus to the Jewish senate and people, greeting. We hope that you prosper. We too are in good health. Menelaus has informed us of your desire to return to your own homes. Therefore we declare an amnesty for all who return before the thirtieth of Xanthicus. The Jews may follow their own food-laws as heretofore and none of them shall be charged with any previous infringement. I am sending Menelaus to reassure you. Farewell. The fifteenth of Xanthicus in the year 148 (i.e. 164). (II *Maccabees* 11.22-33)

One important outcome of this conflict was the emergence of the Maccabee family as the secular and religious leaders of the Jewish community, who eventually (in 129 under John Hyracanus) founded themselves an independent dynasty closely modelled on that of the Seleucid kings (see above p. 138). It should be emphasised, against a widespread misconception, that the revolt of the Maccabees did not lead to the secession and independence of Judaea in 164 (cf., for example, I *Maccabees* 10.1-9; 10.20; 10.59-60; 13.40); rather, what is striking is the way in which the later Maccabee leaders prided themselves on their close relations with the Seleucid kings and how much they valued, and competed for the honour of being elevated to, the status of royal 'Friends' (cf., for example, I *Maccabees* 10.20; 10.89; 11.57-8). Only *after* Antiochus VII's military defeat and death and the major loss of crucial territories, in terms of economic and military resources, did Judaea come into being as an independent petty kingdom.

'Decadence'

One feature that surfaces in classical historiography, propounded to explain the decline and collapse of the Seleucid realm, is a consistently 'racist' view that portrays the Syrians, i.e. the Seleucid kings and their subjects, as degenerate weaklings lacking the moral and physical fibre to fight. A good example is the extreme caricature by Posidonius of the people of north Syria going to war:

> They grasped daggers and small lances covered with rust and dirt; they

> put on hats with visors, which afforded shade, but did not prevent breathing at the throat; they carried with them drinking-horns full of wine and food of every variety, and beside these lay small flutes and single pipes, implements of revel, not of battle. (*FGrH* 82 F2 = Athenaeus IV 176)

This picture is totally at variance from that presented by some other sources, such as the detailed descriptions of hard-fought battles in *Maccabees*. Most striking and illustrative of the full engagement of the inhabitants of the Seleucid state in the military campaigns of this period is Diodorus' account of the reaction of the Antiochenes to Antiochus VII's defeat by the Parthians in 129:

> When Antioch received the news of Antiochus' death, not only did the city go into public mourning, but every private house as well was dejected and filled with lamentation. Above all, the wailing of the women enflamed their grief. Indeed, since three hundred thousand men had been lost, including those who had accompanied the army as supernumeraries, not a household could be found that was exempt from misfortune. Some were mourning the loss of brothers, some of husbands, and some of sons, while many girls and boys, left orphaned, wept for their own bereavement, till at last Time, the best healer of grief, dulled the edge of their sorrow. (D.S. XXXIV/XXXV 17,1)

The historiographical portrayal of the Seleucid collapse as due to decadence fits into a general mode of explaining the decline of empires in terms of the corrupting effects of power, and is well illustrated by popular accounts of the fall of the Achaemenid empire (for criticisms of this view cf. Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1983b; 1987a; 1987b; Briant 1987b, 42-52; Kuhrt 1988b). However widespread such notions have been, and are, they must be vigorously resisted and seen as a representation of the defeated created by the victors, who felt the need to propagate such images for their own purposes. The preceding pages should have made clear that it bears little relation to the historical realities of the last years of the Seleucid kingdom.

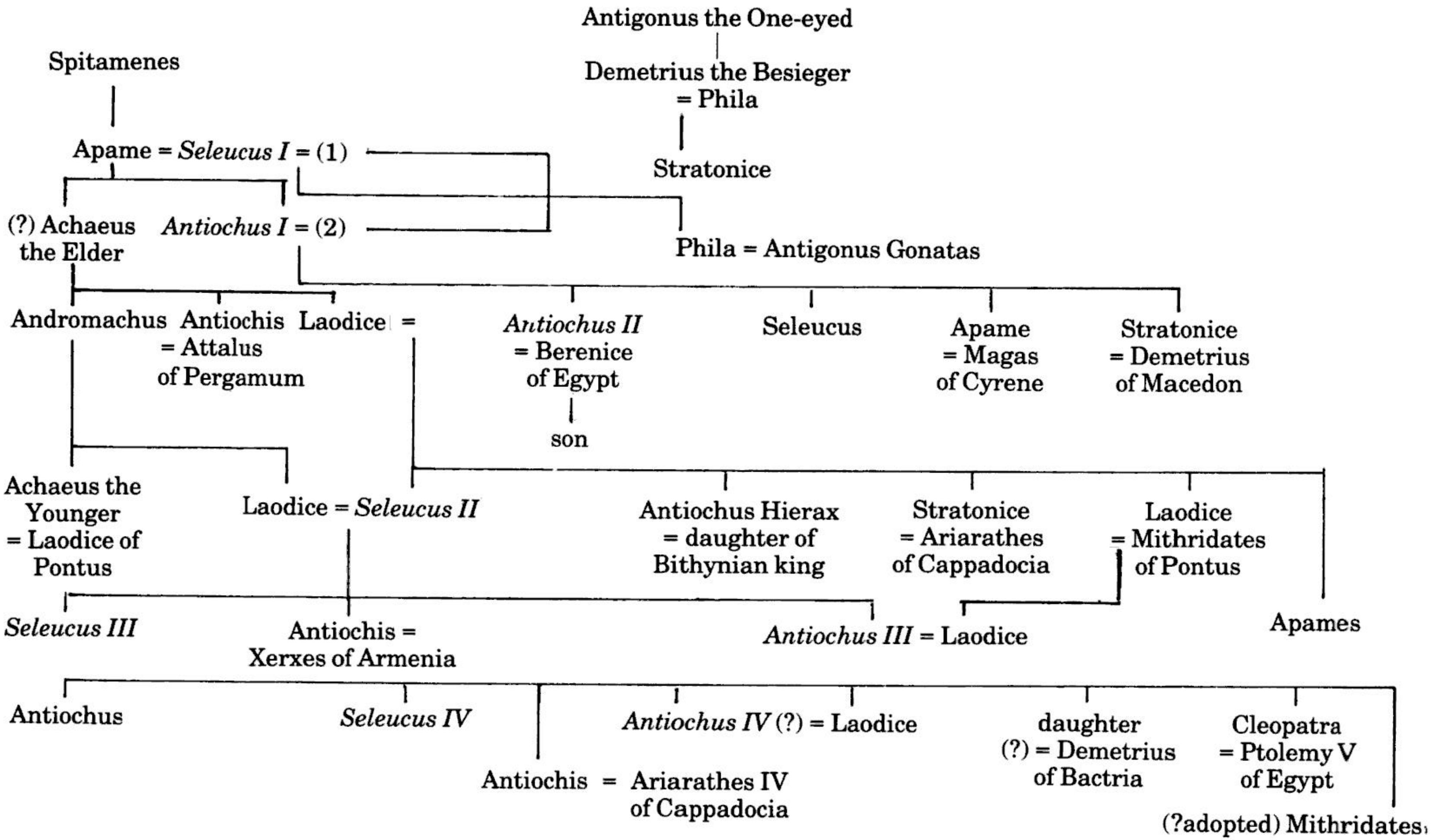
Chronology of Seleucid and Parthian Kings

(to Mithridates II)

Seleucus I Nicator	305-281
Antiochus I Soter	281-261
Antiochus II Theos	261-246
Seleucus II Callinicus	246-225
Seleucus III Soter	225-223
Antiochus III the Great	223-187
Seleucus IV Philopator	187-175
Antiochus IV Epiphanes	175-164
Antiochus V Eupator	164-162
Demetrius I Soter	162-150
Alexander Balas	150-145
Demetrius II Nicator	145-141
Antiochus VI Epiphanes	145-142
Antiochus VII Sidetes	138-129
Demetrius II Nicator	129-125
Cleopatra Thea	126
Cleopatra Thea & Antiochus VIII Grypus	125-121
Seleucus V	125
Antiochus VIII Grypus	121-96
Antiochus IX Cyzicenus	115-95

Arsaces	247
Tiridates	211
Artabanus I	*c.* 211-191
Pripatius	*c.* 191-176
Phraates I	*c.* 176-171
Mithridates I	*c.* 171-138
Phraates II	*c.* 138-128?
Artabanus II	*c.* 128-124/3
Mithridates II	*c.* 124/3-87

The Seleucid Family in the Third Century



Abbreviations

ABC = A.K. Grayson *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* Locust Valley N.Y. (TCS 5) 1975
AchHist I = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (ed) *Achaemenid History* I: *sources, structures, synthesis* Leiden 1987
AchHist II = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Achaemenid History* II: *the Greek sources* Leiden 1987
AchHist III = A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds) *Achaemenid History* III: *method and theory* Leiden 1988
AchHist IV = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Achaemenid History* IV: *centre and periphery* Leiden 1990
AchHist V = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J.-W. Drijvers (eds) *Achaemenid History* V: *the roots of the European tradition* Leiden 1990
AchHist VI = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Achaemenid History* VI: *old cultures in a new empire* Leiden 1991
AchHist VIII = H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, M.C. Root and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Achaemenid History* VIII: *continuity and change* Leiden (in press)
ActIr = *Acta Iranica*
ADFU = Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka
AMI = *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*
Amyzon = J. and L. Robert *Fouilles d'Amyzon en Carie* Tome I: *exploration, histoire, monnaies et inscriptions* Paris 1983
ANET = J.B. Pritchard (ed) *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament* (3rd rev. ed.) Princeton, N.J. 1969
Annales ESC = *Annales: economies, sociétés, civilisations*
AnOr = Analecta Orientalia
ANS = American Numismatic Society
AOAT = Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOF = *Altorientalische Forschungen*
ASNP = *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*
Austin = M.M. Austin *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: a selection of ancient sources in translation* Cambridge 1981
BaM = *Baghdader Mitteilungen*
BAR = British Archaeological Reports
BASOR = *Bulletin of the American Schools for Oriental Research*
BCH = *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
BE = *Bulletin Epigraphique* (published in *REG*)
BEFEO = *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française de l'Extrême Orient*
BibArch = *Biblical Archaeologist*
BiOr = *Bibliotheca Orientalis*
BSOAS = *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
Burstein = S.M. Burstein *The Hellenistic Age from the Battle of Ipsos to the death of Kleopatra VII* (Translated documents of Greece and Rome 3) Cambridge 1985
CAH III/1 = *Cambridge Ancient History* III/1: *the prehistory of the Balkans; the Middle East and the Aegean world, tenth to eighth centuries B.C.* (Cambridge 1983)
CAH IV = *Cambridge Ancient History* IV: *Persia, Greece and the western Mediterranean c. 525-479 B.C.* (Cambridge 1988)

CAH VII/1 = *Cambridge Ancient History* VII/1: *the hellenistic world* (Cambridge 1984)
CAH VIII = *Cambridge Ancient History* VIII: *Rome and the Mediterranean to 133 B.C.* (Cambridge 1989)
CHI I = *Cambridge History of Iran* I: *the land of Iran* (Cambridge 1968)
CHI II = *Cambridge History of Iran* II: *the Median and Achaemenian periods* (Cambridge 1985)
CHI III = *Cambridge History of Iran* III: *the Seleucid, Parthian and Sassanian periods* (Cambridge 1983)
CQ = *Classical Quarterly*
CR = *Classical Review*
CRAI = *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*
DB = Darius: Behistun Inscription
D.S. = Diodorus Siculus
EpAn = *Epigraphica Antolica*
ESM = E. Newell *The Coinage of the Eastern Seleucid Mints: from Seleucus I to Antiochus III* (Numismatic Studies 1) New York 1938
FGrH = F. Jacoby *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* Berlin 1923-
FHG = *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* ed. C. Müller
GGM = C. Müller (ed) *Geographi Graeci Minores*
GHI = R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* Oxford 1969
Hdt. = Herodotus
IDidyma = A. Rehm *Die Inschriften, Milet* vol. 3 (Berlin 1914)
IEJ = *Israel Exploration Journal*
IG = *Inscriptiones Graecae*
IGLS = L. Jalalbert, R. Mouterde, J.-P. Rey-Coquais (eds) *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* Paris 1929-
Illion = R. Frisch *Die Inschriften von Ilion* (IGSK 3) Bonn 1975
IrAnt = *Iranica Antiqua*
JA = *Journal Asiatique*
JEA = *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JESHO = *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JHS = *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JJS = *Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES = *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JRAS = *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JRS = *Journal of Roman Studies*
JS = *Journal des Savants*
Labraunda III/1 = J. Crampa *Labraunda* vol. 3, part 1: *the Greek inscriptions* Lund 1969
Labraunda III/2 = J. Crampa *Labraunda* vol. 3, part 2: *the Greek inscriptions* Lund 1972
LBAT = *Late Babylonian Astronomical and related texts* copied by T.G. Pinches and J.N. Strassmaier, Providence, R.I. 1955
Michel = E. Michel *Recueil d'Inscriptions Grecques* Brussels 1900
MRE = *Major Rock Edicts* (cf. Thapar 1961)
MVAG = Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft
NABU = *Notes Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires*
NCBT = siglum for Newell Collection of Babylonian Tablets, New Haven
OECT IX = G.J.P. McEwan *Texts from Hellenistic Babylonia in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts IX) Oxford 1982
OGIS = W. Dittenberger *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae* Leipzig 1903
OIP = Oriental Institute Publications
OpAth = *Opuscula Atheniensis*
Or = *Orientalia*
PBA = *Proceedings of the British Academy*
PCPS = *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
Polyb. = Polybius

PSBA = *Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archaeology*
Q.C. = Quintus Curtius Rufus
RA = *Revue Archéologique*
RAss = *Revue d'Assyriologie*
RC = C.B. Welles *Royal Correspondence of the Hellenistic Period* London 1934
REA = *Revue des Etudes Anciennes*
REG = *Revue des Etudes Grecques*
RLA = *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* Berlin 1928-
RN = *Revue Numismatique*
RPhil = *Revue Philologique*
RTP = P. Briant *Rois, Tributs et Paysans* (Centre de Recherche d'Histoire Ancienne 43) Paris 1982
SAOC = Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations
SCO = *Studi Classici e Orientale*
SE = Seleucid Era
SEG = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*
Staatsverträge = H. Bengtson (ed) *Die Staatsverträge des Altertums* vol. III Munich 1969
StIr = *Studia Iranica*
Stud.Or. = Studia Orientalia
Syll^3 = W. Dittenberger (ed) *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* 4 vols (3rd ed) 1915-1924
SymbOsl = *Symbolae Osloenses*
TCL 3 = F. Thureau-Dangin *Une relation de la huitième campagne de Sargon* Paris 1912
Trog. = Pompeius Trogus
WdO = *Welt des Altertums*
WSM = E.T. Newell *The Coinage of the Western Seleucid Mints from Seleucus I to Antiochus III* (Numismatic Studies 4) New York
YBC = Yale Babylonian Collection
YCS = Yale Classical Studies
YOS 1 = A.T. Clay *Miscellaneous inscriptions in the Yale Babylonian Collection* New Haven, Conn. 1915
ZA = *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete*
ZÄS = *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache*
ZPE = *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

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